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JACOB
Wreſtling with GOD,
AND
PREVAILING:

OR,

A Treatiſe concerning the

Neceſsity and Efficacy of Faith

IN

PRAYER:

Wherein divers weighty Queſtions and Caſes of Conſcience about Praying in Faith, are ſtated and reſolved.

For the comforting and ſatisfying of weak and ſcrupulous Conſciences: The Conviction of formal Hypocrites, and awakening of all Saints both weak and ſtrong, great and ſmall, to this great duty of Prayer.

By one who hath obtained mercy to be a Miniſter of, and Sufferer for, the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt in this hour of temptation.

John 16. 24. *Aſk and yee ſhall receive, that your joy may bee full.*

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TO THE READER.

WHoever thou art that takeſt this Book into thy hand, know, that as to thy ſpiritual ſtate, thou art either a Sinner, or a Saint; a Beleever, or an Unbeleever, in Chriſt, or out of Chriſt; for betwixt theſe there is no *Medium*, or middle ſtate. Joh. 3. 36 1 Joh. 5. 12

Now if thou beeſt a ſinner, an unbeleeving Chriſtleſs ſoul,

Then here is the root of all thy ſpiritual miſery (which is great beyond expreſſion) and the bar, that keeps out all ſpiritual good and mercy from thy ſoul, that thou art at a diſtance, and eſtranged from communion, the

ſweet, and ſoul-enriching, ſoul-ſanctifying, ſoul-ſaving, and ſoul-
Joh. 17. 3 ſatisfying communion of Jeſus Chriſt, which is the life of grace, the life of glory, the life of God! *Epheſ.* 4. 18. *Alienated from the life of God.*

And this is thy Hell upon Earth, though thou knoweſt it
Eph. 2. 12 not; that thou art without God, and without Chriſt in the world, *i. e.* without true ſpiritual enjoyment of God, and Jeſus Chriſt, through want of the life and exerciſe of Faith in thy ſoul, and through a ſinful neglect, or a miſ-performance, as of all other holy duties, ſo eſpecially of this great duty of prayer; in the conſtant and right performance whereof, ſuch ſweet and bleſſed communion with God may bee enjoyed; as *Galeatius Caracciolus*, that famous *Italian* Convert (having taſted the ſweetneſſe thereof

thereof in his own ſoul, and having forſaken all that was dear to him in the world upon that account) was wont to ſay; *That hee was not worthy the name of a Chriſtian, that did not prize one moments communion with God before a thouſand worlds!*

Now Reader, know, that if thou beeſt ſuch a one as art yet a ſtranger to communion with God; it is one deſign of this following Treatiſe, to lead thee unto the Father, by the Son, and to inſtruct thee into this great duty and myſtery of praying in Faith, which if the Lord ſhall give thee rightly to underſtand, and wiſely to improve, will open ſuch a door for eſcape out of thy ſpiritual miſery, and for the letting in of all ſpiritual mercies and bleſſings into thy ſoul, as may make thee happy to all eternity.

If thou beeſt a Saint, a Belee-

Pſa. 37.25 yer, a Soul in Chriſt, then to in-
Cant. 1.2
Pſal.63.1, joy communion with him is thy
2,3. 5 life, thy glory, thy joy, thy crown, thy heaven upon earth; nothing ſo ſweet, nothing ſo precious, nothing ſo deſirable to thy ſoul, as communion and fellowſhip with the Father and his Son Jeſus Chriſt, through the ſpirit, and in the conſtant and right uſe and performance of theſe heavenly ordinances, and holy duties, which are the ſweet walks of
Rev. 1. 13 Jeſus Chriſt, wherein hee delights to communicate himſelf to the ſouls of his people; And
Cant. 7.5 thoſe ſpiritual Galleries, in which the King is held and retained by
Cant. 4 9 his beloved Spouſe, in moſt ſweet
Cant. 2.4, embraces, and ſoul-endearing
5,6 converſes, to the raviſhing of the hearts of each other.

Amongſt which ſpiritual walks and galleries, there is none in which Jeſus Chriſt doth more delight,

delight, and abundantly communicate himſelf to the ſouls of his people, than in this great ordinance of prayer, which is therefore called his delight. Prov. 15.8

Now 'tis alſo the deſign and ſcope of this Treatiſe, to further thy ſouls communion with Jeſus Chriſt in this ordinance of prayer, by ſhewing thee

1. The Neceſſity.

2. The Efficacy of Faith in Prayer.

Reſolving divers ſcruples, and Caſes of Conſcience about it.

Awakening and ſtirring up thy ſoul to it, teaching thee to bee ſpiritual and heavenly in it, and revealing unto thee the great and glorious things that may be done and obtained by it.

Therefore whether thou beeſt Sinner or Saint, in Chriſt, or out of Chriſt, ſtrong or weak in grace, read this ſmall Treatiſe; and

and the Lord give thee to underſtand what thou readeſt, ſincerely to imbrace, and faithfully to practice what thou underſtandeſt, and to reap the ſpiritual fruit thereof in grace here, and glory hereafter: And if thou reapeſt any fruit and benefit to thy ſoul by this diſcourſe, give him the glory, who is the Author of Truth, not the Inſtrument. And if thou reapeſt no fruit, or beeſt made worſe by it, blame neither the Author, nor the Inſtrument, but thine own heart as the cauſe of it.

To

To the Reader.
By a Friend of the Authors.

THis enſuing treatiſe was put into my hand, by the worthy Author ther-of, whoſe humility was jealous of the publication of this peece; By a curſory view of it, I quickly perceived the ſpirit of it, and preſt to the publiſhing of it, for the relief, quickening, and conſolation of ſuch as underſtand praying in the Holy Ghoſt. And do therefore think meet to acquaint you that the Author of this treatiſe of prayer, is well known to be a judicious, and faithful Miniſter of God, and ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt, who hath witneſſed a good confeſſion, and that in bonds, for the Commandments of God, and the teſtimony of Jeſus; In which condition, no doubt, his ſoul was converſant in this heavenly exerciſe, and was taken, (as others of his fellow ſervants,) into a more intimate communion with Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe breathings and cryes, with others of his brethren, are gone up into the ears of the Lord of Hoſts, Pſa. 97. 11.

To the Reader.

The Accuſer of the Brethren hath great wrath againſt the Spirit of prayer, in this Houre, and hath blaſphemed it at the higheſt rate that ever was heard of in any generation, being greatly tormented thereat, crying out, Oh, Away with this praying in the ſpirit. Wonderful it is, that men pretending Chriſtianity, and to have read the Holy Scriptures, ſhould decry praying in the Spirit, (which is perfectly oppoſed to ſtinted forms) but that the way of the Spirit in the hearts of the called of God, is fooliſhneſs, even to the wiſe and learned that know it not.

The Author of this Book, as a good witneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, hath given out a holy and experimental Teſtimony to this Spirit of prayer, *and hath diſcovered the* abomination *of Hypocritical praying, in the* vain repetitions *and* ſaying long prayers for a preterence, *Mat. 6. 7. and 23. 14. to juſtle out the ſpirit of prayer, promiſed to* all Miniſters *ſent by Jeſus Chriſt, and* all Saints, *eſpecially in the New Teſtament daies. If this therfore come into the hands of any prayerleſs ſouls, know thou art yet* without the Spirit, *and ſo art* none of Jeſus Chriſts

Chriſts. *Rom.* 8. 9. *Where-ever the* Spirit of Grace *is, it is a* Spirit of prayer, *Zach.* 12. 10. *Doſt thou feel the guilt of ſin, the want of pardon, peace, grace, holineſs, thou wouldſt not need the words of others to help thee in praying, but thou wouldſt know what it is, for the* ſpirit to help (*the proper and onely help in prayer*) *thy* infirmities, *and couldſt bee no more ſatisfied with dry and empty forms, then a hungry man with Air.*

If thou art a weak doubting ſoul, and complaineſt of an unbelieving heart, (*which is a good ſymptome*) *here thou mayeſt meet with plain and ſpiritual reſolves to thy doubts, about the acceptance of thy prayer, and the looking for anſwers thereof, and what faith thou art to exerciſe on promiſes in order thereunto.*

Yea all Saints may be further inſtructed in the efficacy and prevalency of prayer, and to be encouraged that the Lord will not caſt off a praying Generation that cry day and night unto him. The Lord haſten to power forth the ſpirit of light and prayer upon his people, and upon the world, as the beſt ſign of his own approaching to judge the earth. In

the waiting for which, let all that have received the firſt fruits thereof be found at this day; To which expectation, Reader, I commend thee, and this ſpiritual treatiſe to thy peruſal, and it, and thy ſelf to the bleſſing made over to the ſeed of Jacob, that wraſtle it out with God, and prevail over him. The Saints do in a ſenſe, govern the World with Jeſus Chriſt already, by the ſpirit of Prayer that is in them, making interceſſion in them according to Chriſts interceſſion in heaven, and uſually wee may know what God is about to do in the world by the prayers of his Saints, eſpecially in this laſt age of the world, when their ſouls travel and are in pangs for Sions Redemption, and the earth-quake to come into the Nations of the world, till all the foundations of it, (as laid for the intereſt of Babylon *and Antichriſtianiſm) are ſhaken and out of courſe, which the Lord will* haſten in his time. *But I muſt break off, and be-ſpeak thy prayers for the Author and my ſelf, and all the Lords afflicted Miniſters, that are mourning in corners, reſting,*

Thy Servant for Jeſus ſake.

Jacob wreſtling with God, and prevailing.

Matthew 21. 22.

And all things whatſoever ye ſhall ask in Prayer beleeving, ye ſhall receive.

THis Text is brought in as an *Epiphonema* or Cloſing ſpeech to the hiſtory of the fruitleſs Fig-tree, which being curſed by Jeſus Chriſt for its barrenneſs, preſently withers, and is dried up, *v.* 19. to the great admiration of the Diſciples, *verſ.* 20. which action, as it was extraordinary and miraculous in its ſelf, ſo in the tendency thereof it was of extraordinary uſe to the

Diſciples, and did carry along with it a double inſtruction.

Firſt, To beware of an outſide formal Profeſſion, without ſpiritual fruit, and a ſuitable converſation, which is alway attended with the wrath and diſpleaſure of God, and is nigh unto curſing, *Heb.* 6. 8.

Secondly, To teach the great Efficacy and Power of Faith, and what great things may be done thereby, either extraordinary, according to that diſpenſation of working miracles, which was but for the time preſent, and peculiar to ſome, *verſ.* 21. for all had not this gift, nor faith of miracles, 1 *Cor.* 12. 29. 30.

2. Or elſe ordinary, according to the gift and force of prayer, which is perpetual and common to all the Saints, by which they have a conſtant and joynt acceſs to the Throne of Grace in all cauſes

cauſes whatſoever, and may accordingly prevail with God, provided they pray in Faith as in the Text. *And all things whatſoever, &c.*

In this Text of Scripture there are two things principally taught and commended to our conſideration.

1. The Neceſſity } of Faith in
2. The Efficacy } Prayer.

The firſt, *viz.* The Neceſſity of Faith in Prayer, is gathered from the word [*Beleeving*] which is brought in as a ſpecifical and qualifying adjunct, or neceſſary ingredient to all our prayers. *And all things whatſoever ye ſhall aſk in prayer* beleeving, *ye ſhall receive.*

The Neceſſity of Faith in Prayer, is alſo gathered from other Texts of Scripture, as *Heb.* 11.6. *But without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God; for he that cometh*

to God muſt beleeve, &c. And again, *James* 1. 5, 6. *If any of you lack wiſdome, let him ask of God, &c. But let him ask in Faith.* And look, as the body without the ſoul is dead and uſeleſs, and cannot perform the actions of a man: So alſo Prayer without Faith, is dead and unprofitable, *James* 1. 6,7,8. So that Faith is the ſoul and life of Prayer, and therefore a neceſſary ingredient thereto.

1. Queſt. or Caſe of Conſcience.

But what kinde of Faith is that which is ſo neceſſarily and indiſpenſibly rēquired in all our prayers to God? is it the Faith of Aſſurance? or the Faith of Relyance? ſeeing James *ſaith*, it muſt be without wavering, and in nothing doubting: *Therefore it would ſeem that there is required in all our prayers to God, a Faith of Aſſurance, yea, of full*

full and perfect Aſſurance, which admits of no doubting or uncertainty of the mind in the thing asked, and that a Faith of Relyance is not ſufficient, ſeeing that is alwaies attended with ſome doubting, as in Eſther, [If I periſh, I periſh] *ſhe relyed upon God in the uſe of means, but yet was doubtful as to the ſucceſs and event thereof. Now if this Faith be not accepted in prayer, then the prayers of moſt of the Children of God are ineffectual, ſeeing moſt of them have not the Faith of Aſſurance.*

That ſaying of the holy man *James*, ſhall be cleared in its proper place.

Anſw. But in anſwer to the Queſtion, it is affirmed, That although it be the duty of all Chriſtians to preſs after the Faith of Aſſurance, as that which tendeth exceedingly to their comfort and inward joy: Yet where there is a

Faith of Relyance, *i.e.* the heart doth inwardly reſt upon Gods alſufficiency, mercy, faithfulneſs, truth, &c. yet with doubting and uncertainty of the mind, whether the thing ſhall be done which is asked of God in prayer; the prayer is accepted of God, and ſhall certainly have a gracious return in due time.

But that we may be the more clear and diſtinct in our handling this point, to the ſatisfaction and comfort of weak and ſcrupulous conſciences: we ſhall firſt give a brief deſcription of theſe two kinds of Faith, in their diſtinct and different natures; that ſo the perſon who is ſcrupulous may the better judge of his Faith, of what kinde it is: And then wee ſhall by Scripture and experience make good our aſſertion, *viz.* that a Faith of Relyance is accepted of God in prayer, where the

the faith of Aſſurance is wanting.

Faith of Aſſurance deſcribed.

The Faith of Aſſurance therefore is a full perſwaſion, and certain Aſſurance of the mind of a Beleever, of the thing asked or hoped for, grounded upon the clear and infallible teſtimony of the Word and Spirit of God in their joynt witneſs. Heb. 10. 22 1 Joh. 5. 13, 14, 15 1 Joh. 5. 6 Rom. 8. 16

Faith of Relyance deſcribed.

The Faith of Relyance is the inward reſting of the heart upon God, his name and attributes, *viz.* his power, wiſdome, mercy, faithfulneſs, truth, &c. for the performance of his Word and Promiſe in general, without any certainty or aſſurance of the mind, with application thereof to its ſelf in ſpecial, wanting the particular witneſs and teſtimony of the Spirit in the caſe, which al- Pſa. 37. 7 Jonah 3. 8, 9 Eſther 4. 16 Job 13. 15 Dan. 3. 17, 18

waies is preſent in the Faith of Aſſurance, but alwaies abſent and wanting in this Faith of Relyance. Of this kind was the Faith of the Leper, *Mat.* 8. 2. [*Lord if thou wilt thou canſt make me clean*] there was a relyance upon the power of Chriſt to do the thing asked, but a doubtfulneſs or uncertainty of the mind as touching the application of that ability and healing power to himſelf in particular. And therefore he puts it with an if; [*Lord if thou wilt*] ſpeaking of his particular and ſecret will in the caſe propounded, which was not yet made known, and therefore he might without ſin doubt of it: But as to his general will, and infinite readineſs to heal the ſick, cleanſe the Lepers, &c. which was abundantly revealed and made known both by Scripture and Experience, he could not have doubted thereof,

without

without great ſin; and ſo would conſequently have been reproved for it.

Thus having deſcribed theſe two kinds of Faith, in their diſtinct and different natures, whereby every one that cometh unto God by prayer, may be able to judge of himſelf, and know what kinde of Faith it is, that he comes withall. We ſhall proceed to make good the Aſſertion, *viz.*

Aſſer. *That a Faith of Relyance is accepted with God in prayer, where a Faith of Aſſurance is wanting.* Proved,

1. By Scripture, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. *It is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.* The general equity and force of which Rule reacheth not onely unto the caſe of Alms; to which the Apoſtle doth there apply it, but alſo unto

to all other caſes wherein wee have to do with God, and particularly unto this caſe of prayer, for otherwiſe God ſhould ſeem to be a hard Maſter, reaping where he hath not ſown, and gathering where he hath not ſtrowed, and expecting to receive, where hee hath not firſt given, which cannot at any time, nor in any caſe be juſtly ſaid of him, who is infinite in mercy, and with whom there is no unrighteouſneſs, all whoſe commands are equal and reaſonable. And who receiveth not from his creature, but according to the gift of his own grace, which hee hath firſt beſtowed, *Rom.* 11. 35. [*or who hath firſt given to him?*] Now forasmuch as Faith is not of our ſelves, but is in an eſpecial manner the gift of God, who worketh all things after the counſel of his own will, and planteth in the hearts

hearts of his people different kinds and meaſures of grace, according to his own good pleaſure, and the uſe he intends to make of them: It remains, that where the Lord hath wrought a Faith of Relyance in the hearts of his people, to whom he hath not given the Faith of Aſſurance. And they come to him in prayer, and in the uſe of all holy means which he hath appointed for the good of their ſouls, with ſuch a Faith as himſelf hath wrought in them; he doth graciouſly accept them according to what they have, and not according to what they have not.

2. By Experience; and this alſo is manifeſt by the common and conſtant experience of the Saints, who when they have ſo come to God in prayer, with a Faith of Adherence, where Aſſurance have been wanting, have been graciouſly 1. Inſtance

graciouſly accepted of the Lord and received a gracious anſwer of ſuch Prayers. As in the caſe of the Leper above-mentioned, *Mat.* 8. 2,3. who when he came to Chriſt in prayer, only in a Faith of Relyance upon his power to help, when as he had no aſſurance of his particular will and purpoſe as to himſelf, and therefore puts an if upon that; [*Lord if thou wilt thou canſt make mee clean*] was graciouſly accepted of the Lord, and obtained a ſpeedy and full anſwer of that prayer, in the very thing he asked, *verſ.* 3. [*And Jeſus put forth his hand, and touched him, ſaying, (I will) be thou clean, and immediately his Leproſie was cleanſed.*]

2. Inſtance And ſo likewiſe in the caſe of the Woman of *Canaan*, *Mat.* 15. 22, --- 29. who came to Chriſt in prayer on the behalf of her afflicted daughter, *verſ.* 22. *Saying, Have*

Have mercy on mee, O Lord, thou Son of David, my daughter is grievously vexed with a Devil. Now here was wrought in this Woman (though a *Canaanite*, a ſtranger, an alien from the Common-wealth of *Iſrael*) a mighty Faith of Relyance, by which ſhe did marvelouſly cling to Jeſus the Son of *David*, relying upon his mercy, and power, to help her, though ſhee had no certain aſſurance, that ſhee ſhould have her petition granted; but many diſcouraging paſſages from Chriſt. As,

Firſt, His ſilence to her prayer, anſwering her not a word, *v.* 23.

Secondly, His ſeeming denial of her requeſt, with this reaſon againſt it; *That he was not ſent, ſave to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael*, verſ. 24.

3dly. His upbraiding her with her ſtock and generation; being deſcended

deſcended of the curſed ſtock and generation of the *Canaanites* in reſpect whereof he calls her dog, *verſ.* 26. by all which it is moſt clear, ſhe neither had, nor could have any aſſurance, but only ſhe exerciſeth her Faith of Relyance, notwithſtanding all difficulties and diſcouragements, and ſtill ſhe prayes, and worſhips the Son of *David*, confeſſing her own vileneſs and unworthineſs, and Juſtifying the Lord in calling her dog, and taking advantage there upon to hope that yet there might be ſome crumbs of mercy for her, *verſ.* 27. *Truth Lord, yet the Dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their Maſters table.* And at length with this Faith ſhe prevails, and hath a full anſwer of her petition, with a high commendation of her Faith, *verſ.* 28. *Then Jeſus answered and ſaid unto her, O Woman, great is thy Faith! be it unto thee even*

even as thou wilt: And her Daughter was made whole the ſame hour. And ſo much by way of anſwer to the firſt Queſtion.

2. Queſt. or Caſe of Conſcience.

But whether is it ſufficient to have the habit and being of Faith in the heart when we pray? or is the exerciſe and acting of Faith neceſſarily required alſo?

Anſw. That it is not ſufficient to have the habit and being of Faith in the heart when we pray, but the exercife and actuality of our Faith is required in our addreſſes to God by prayer: 'tis not enough that the perſon praying, be a Beleever, but alſo that the prayer made be a prayer of Faith, or a beleeving Prayer: hence it is put in the preſent tenſe: [*Beleeving*] *And all things whatſoever ye ſhall aſk in prayer* [*beleeving*]

leeving] not having beleeved, but beleeving, in the preſent tenſe: intimating to us, that a preſent exerciſe of Faith is required; otherwiſe the prayer may be an unbeleeving, and ſo by conſequence a fruitleſs prayer, though the perſon be a beleever; for a godly man may make a carnal prayer; a beleeving man may make an unbeleeving prayer. As the good man *Joſhua* ſeems to do, *Joſh.* 7, 7, 8, 9. The truth is, wee are ſaid to have no more Faith than we act. And therefore Jeſus Chriſt reproves his Diſciples as faithleſs, when, as 'tis clear, they wanted not the habit, but the exerciſe of Faith in that particular caſe of caſting out the dumb ſpirit, *Mark* 9.19. Thoſe prayers therefore are faithleſs prayers, in which there is not a preſent exerciſe of faith, though the perſon or perſons praying, be in a ſtate of grace, and

and have the habit of Faith in their hearts.

3. Queſt. or Caſe of Conſcience.

If the exerciſe and actuality of Faith be neceſſarily required in all things whatſoever we ask of God in the name of Chriſt, then whether may ſuch an exerciſe of Faith be accepted, as is accompanied with ſome doubting and wavering of the mind: or is ſuch an exerciſe of Faith only current with God in Prayer, as is clear and ſtedfaſt, without the leaſt doubt or wavering?

The reaſon of this ſcruple or queſtion is, that ſaying of the holy man *James*, in his *chap. 1. v. 6, 7. But let him ask in Faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the Sea, driven with the wind, and toſſed; for let not that man think, that he ſhall receive any thing of the Lord.* Now if ſuch an exerciſe of Faith, as is attended

with ſome doubting, be not accepted of God, and the prayers of ſuch be altogether fruitleſs and unprofitable, as this Scripture ſeemeth to import, then is the hope, comfort and experience of the moſt of Gods Children thereby cut off and denyed; And if otherwiſe, then how is this saying of *James* to bee underſtood, and reconciled with other Scriptures?

Two kinds of doubting.

Anſ. There is a twofold doubting or wavering of the mind, ſpoken of in Scripture.

The one which doth alwaies exclude and oppoſe Faith; ſo that where ſuch doubting is, there is not the leaſt acting or ſtirring of Faith in the heart.

The other, which doth onely argue weakneſs of Faith, and is conſiſtent with the exerciſe and actuality thereof at the ſame time in ſome degree.

The

The saying of the holy man *James* above-mentioned, is to be understood onely of the former, *viz.* such doubting or wavering of the mind, as doth oppose Faith, and is exclusive to it; as is clear by the antithesis or opposition of Faith, and wavering being set in the Text the one against the other; for saith *James*, *Let him ask in Faith*; And then hee opposes thereunto this word [*wavering*] *nothing wavering*, μηδὲν διακρινόμενος, *i. e.* not disputing or cavilling; so that 'tis manifest the Apostle speaketh of such a doubting or wavering, as argues a nullity and privation of Faith, where there is no beleeving of the Promise and Word of God, but a disputing and cavilling against it, and an opposing of it. As in the case of that Lord, on whose hand the King leaned, when the Prophet by the Word

1 Kind explained.

of the Lord fore-told ſo great plenty to be on the morrow in the gate of *Samaria*; who diſputing and reaſoning againſt the Promiſe and Word of God, out of an unbeleeving heart, anſwered the man of God: *Behold, if the Lord would make windows in Heaven, might this thing bee?* 2 King. 7. 1, 2. This was ſuch a wavering as *James* ſpeaks of, which argued a nullity of Faith, and ſtrength of unbeleef in the heart of that Noble man, who thus diſputed and cavilled againſt the Promiſe, giving no credit to the Word of the Lord, ſpoken by the Prophet, nor in the leaſt acknowledging or relying upon the power of God, for the performance thereof: And therefore was made a ſpectacle of divine vengeance, for his diſobedience and unbeleef, being trodden to death the next day in the

the gate, which verified the Word ſpoken to him by the Prophet: *Thou ſhalt ſee it with thine eyes, but ſhalt not eat thereof*, verſ. 2. compared with *v.* 19, 20.

And of ſuch a doubting as this is that ſaying of the Apoſtle *Paul* to be underſtood, *Rom* 14. 23. *And he that doubteth is damned, becauſe he eateth not of Faith; for whatſoever is not of Faith, is ſin.* 'Tis evident in this place the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of ſuch a doubting, as argues a want of Faith, and right underſtanding of true Chriſtian liberty, in that particular action of eating: In which hee that eateth without Faith, is condemned in his own conſcience, though the thing in it ſelf be lawful, yet to him it is ſinful and unlawful, for want of Faith in what he doth: Otherwiſe a man is not condemned in that action which he doth with ſome

doubting; wherein there is alſo a real and true exerciſe of Faith, though in a weak and low degree. As *Simon* in letting down the Net at the command of Chriſt, *Luke* 5. 5.

2 Kind explained.

The ſecond kind of doubting or wavering ſpoken of in Scripture, is ſuch a doubting as is conſiſtent with the preſent exerciſe of Faith, and argues only weakneſs of Faith, but not the want of it; which kind of doubting is found in the true Children of God, even in their beſt duties oft times; the conſideration whereof doth alſo much trouble and afflict them. Now this kind of doubting, though it is ſinful, and to be reproved, yet being a ſin of infirmity, and weakneſs, not of wilful rebellion, or preſumption, the Lord doth in mercy cover and paſs it by in his people, and doth not therefore reject their perſons;

Gen. 18. 13
Mat. 8. 26
Mat. 14. 31

perſons, or any their ſincere and faithful ſervices, but doth graciouſly accept them in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, notwithſtanding ſuch infirmities as by the following inſtances doth appear.

And thus *Sarah* was accepted of God in the exerciſe of her weak Faith, when the Lord made a promiſe of a Son to be given her in her old age, though therein ſhe was not without ſome doubting, as appeareth by comparing *Gen.* 18. 12, 13, 14. with *Heb.* 11. 11. In the former, *viz. Gen.* 18. 13. She is reproved for her doubting: *Wherefore did Sarah laugh? is any thing too hard for the Lord?* But in the latter, *viz.* Heb. 11. 11. She is commended and approved for her Faith at the ſame time, and in the ſame action; *Through Faith alſo Sarah her ſelf received ſtrength to conceive ſeed, and was delivered of a childe when* 1. Inſtance

ſhe was paſt age, becauſe ſhe judged him faithful who had promiſed: So that by comparing theſe two Scriptures, which relate to the ſame perſon and action, it is manifeſt that *Sarahs* doubting through weakneſs of Faith, did not hinder her acceptance with God in that action, wherein there was the real exerciſe of her Faith, though weak and wavering: for ſaith the Text, *Shee judged him faithful who had promiſed*; therefore ſhe did believe the promiſe, and relye upon the faithfulneſs of God for the performance thereof, notwithſtanding the great doubting and ſtirring of unbeleef in her heart at the ſame time, which yet ſhe reſiſted, and alſo at length did overcome. Whence theſe two things may truly be gathered.

1. That great doubting and wavering of the mind may conſiſt

ſiſt with the real, though weak exerciſe of Faith in the ſame holy action.

2. That ſuch holy actions are accepted of God in Chriſt, notwithſtanding ſuch doubtings.

The truth of this doth alſo appear in the caſe of him who brought his childe to Chriſt being poſſeſſed with a dumb ſpirit. And now finding his caſe to be exceeding difficult, in that he had already tryed the Diſciples; and they could not caſt out this dumb ſpirit out of his Son, *Mark* 9. 18. hee begins through unbeleef to hæſitate and doubt concerning the power of Chriſt alſo, and puts an [if] upon the matter, *verſ.* 22. *But* [*if*] *thou canſt do any thing, have compaſſion on us and help us*: ſo that here was great doubting and ſtirring of unbeleef, which Chriſt reproves, *verſ.* 23. and replyes to him; *If* 2. Inſtance

thou

thou canſt beleeve, all things are poſsible to him that beleeveth; which reproof of Chriſt prevails ſo far upon him to the breaking of his heart, and humbling of him for his unbeleef, that hee cryes out with tears, from a ſenſe of his ſin, as well as of his childes miſery, *Lord, I beleeve, help mine unbeleef.* Now here was ſome Faith mixed with great doubting and unbeleef, yet being bewailed and confeſſed, the prayer of this diſtreſſed and afflicted Father, on the behalf of his childe, is heard and anſwered; for the dumb ſpirit is caſt out, and his childe healed, *verſ.* 25, 26, 27.

Oh the infinite riches, and condeſcention of free grace! that ever ſuch a prayer as this ſhould be heard and anſwered, that put an [if] upon the power of Chriſt [*If thou canſt do any thing, have compaſion on us*] And yet there being

being found ſome Faith in this prayer (though attended with ſo great doubting and acting of unbeleef) it is accepted and owned by the Lord Jeſus.

The anſwer and reſolution therefore of the queſtion, is, That although it be the duty of the people of God, to preſs after ſuch Faith in prayer, as is without doubting and wavering of the mind: And all ſuch doubting and wavering of the mind, is in it ſelf ſinful, and to be reproved; and by no means to be cheriſhed and allowed: Yet ſuch doubting and wavering as doth ariſe onely from weakneſs of Faith in the minde of a beleever (where there is alſo a real exerciſe of Faith, though in the weakeſt and loweſt degree) doth not, nor can at any time hinder the acceptance and efficacy of their prayers with God; but their perſons and prayers

Epheſ. 1. 6
1 Pet. 2. 5
James 5. 17, 18

prayers are acceptable to God through Chriſt Jeſus, with *Notwithſtanding* to all ſuch infirmities.

4. Queſt. or Caſe of Conſcience.

If the exerciſe of Faith be neceſſarily required in all our prayers to God, then whether is it at all times, and in all caſes required, that hee who cometh to God in prayer, doth abſolutely and determinately believe for the very thing, that he prayeth for? or that hee prayeth with a ſubmiſſion to the will of God, either to have the thing that he prayeth for; or that which the Lord may ſee to be better for him?

The occaſion and ground of this Queſtion, is, That ſome Chriſtians being earneſtly carried out in prayer againſt ſome particular luſt or corruption, as pride, envy, inordinate love to the creature, or againſt the inward motions

tions and luſtings of any other ſin, which they feel ſtirring in themſelves, praying that the ſame may be removed, and taken out of the way, or for any other particular mercy which they have an earneſt deſire to obtain at the hands of God: Now becauſe they finde not an anſwer in the very thing asked, but the ſame luſt or corruption remaineth ſtill unſubdued, and the mercy ſo greatly deſired, ſtill denied, notwithſtanding all their prayers; They uſually conclude, that they prayed not in Faith, and that their prayers are not at all accepted or anſwered, becauſe they have not the thing asked; referring their caſe to that of *Iames* 4. 3. *Yee ask, and receive not, becauſe yee ask amiſs.* And not only in this caſe of inbred corruption, but alſo in many other caſes Chriſtians are much put to it, to know

know when they ask in Faith, and when they ask amiſs: Many concluding they ask not in Faith, becauſe they have not the very thing asked.

Anſ. The exerciſe of our Faith in prayer, muſt be either abſolute and determinate in the very thing asked, or conditional and latitudinary, referring to what may be moſt agreeable to the will of God, whether it be the very thing asked, or ſomething elſe according to the nature of the thing which we ask.

The Rule therefore which the Apoſtle propoſeth to himſelf concerning prayer, is diligently to be obſerved by every Chriſtian, 1 *Cor.* 14. 15. *I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with underſtanding alſo.* It therefore concerns every Chriſtian to underſtand the nature of the thing which hee asks of God in praye

other

otherwiſe hee may ask amiſs.

The things which we ask of God in prayer, may fall under a double diſtinction.

1. In reſpect of God.

2. In reſpect of our ſelves; which every Chriſtian ought diligently to mark and conſider, that ſo hee may frame his petitions, and exerciſe his Faith therein, according to the Rule of the Word; for Faith is guided by the light of the Word, and cannot go againſt the Word, nor without the Word in any thing.

1. In reſpect of God.

The things which we come to ask of him in prayer, are either clearly and abſolutely revealed, promiſed, and fore-told in his Word; or elſe ſecret, and not revealed, which hee hath reſerved in his own power.

2. In reſpect of our ſelves. The things which we come to ask

ask of God in prayer, are either abſolutely, and *per ſe* good and neceſſary for us; or they are good and neceſſary for us onely upon ſuch and ſuch variable conſiderations, and ſuppoſitions, as wee are very apt to miſtake about.

Now to apply theſe general Rules to our caſe and queſtion in hand.

1. Rule. In things which are clearly revealed, abſolutely fore-told and promiſed in the Word of God we ought to act our Faith abſolutely and determinately for the very thing we pray for, and not to admit the leaſt doubt or queſtion, but to maintain an holy confidence, that ſuch prayers are alwaies heard, though not preſently anſwered; as 1 *John* 5. 14, 15. *And this is the confidence that wee have in him, that if wee ask any thing according to his will, he*

he heareth us. And if wee know that hee heareth us, whatſoever we ask, wee know that wee have the petitions that wee deſired of him. There is no room for the leaſt doubt or ſcruple in ſuch things which wee ask according to his will; but wee are to pray with full aſſurance of Faith and confidence in ſuch caſes, that the very thing wee ask is granted. As for inſtance in ſome particulars.

Suppoſe I pray for the down- 1. Inſtance
fall and utter ruine of *Babylon* (that *Mother of Harlots.*) I am to beleeve in prayer abſolutely and determinately (without If or And) that the very thing which I now ask, is granted in Heaven, and ſhall be performed in due time; becauſe God hath clearly revealed, and abſolutely foretold and promiſed the ſame in his Word, for the comfort of his Church and People, *Rev.* 18. 2.

2. Inſtance If I ask of God in prayer, the deliverance of his Church and People out of the hands of their wicked enemies, that do afflict them; I ought to pray in full aſſurance of Faith, and with ſure confidence, that the very thing which I ask, is done in Heaven, and ſhall be certainly accompliſhed in Gods due time, becauſe he hath clearly revealed, fore-told, and promiſed the ſame in his moſt holy Word, *Pſal.*37.39.40.

3. Inſtance So likewiſe, when I ask of God in prayer, the ſpiritual preſervation and keeping of his Elect in a time of tryal and temptation, that not one of them may be ſeduced, nor the gates of Hell prevail againſt them, to the overthrow of their Faith. Herein I am poſitively to beleeve, that I have the very thing which I deſire of God, becauſe hee hath clearly revealed, and abſolutely promiſed

promiſed the ſame in his Word, *Mat.* 16. 18. *Mat.* 18. 14. *Mat.* 24. 24. 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. And ſo in all other petitions for things of this nature.

Second part of the Rule

In things which are not clearly revealed, nor abſolutely determined by the Word of God, but left dubious, obſcure, and uncertain as to us, the mind of the Lord concerning the ſame not being declared: wee are not in ſuch caſes to beleeve poſitively for the thing that wee ask of God, but to refer our ſelves to his wiſdome and choice therein, with ſubmiſſion to his holy will.

1. Inſtance

Thus the *Ninivites* in that ſolemn work of faſting and prayer, joyned with repentance, did not, nor could poſitively beleeve for the thing they asked of God, *viz.* the averſion of that national wrath which did hang over their head; but came to God in prayer

with a [may be of Faith] a [peradventure] a who can tell, *if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that wee periſh not*, Jonah 3. 9. and yet were accepted of God therein, and had their petition granted, *verſ.* 10.

2. Inſtance So *Zeph.* 2. 3. *The meek of the earth* are there exhorted to ſeek the Lord, to ſeek meekneſs, to ſeek righteouſneſs, with this motive: *It may be yee ſhall be his in the day of the Lords anger.* Where the mind and will of the Lord in the caſe is not clearly revealed and made known: There no more is required than a may be ~~of Faith~~; for Faith cannot go beyond the Word of the Lord.

3. Inſtance In this reſpect alſo the Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith to *Simon Magus*, Act. 8. 22. *Repent therefore of this thy wickedneſs, and pray God; if* [*perhaps*] *the thought of thine heart*

may

may be forgiven thee. His ſin was great, his caſe very difficult and ſingular; the mind of the Lord not certainly known: Therefore the Apoſtle exhorts him to repent, and to pray; but it muſt be onely with a may be, not a certainty of obtaining, with a perhaps: [*if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.*]

In things which we ask of God in prayer, which are abſolutely and ſimply good and neceſſary for us. Wee are to beleeve and act our Faith poſitively upon the Promiſe and Word of God, for the very thing that wee pray for, without any doubting or wavering ~~in the caſe~~. As ſuppoſe I come to God in prayer to ask of him ſuch a meaſure of grace and wiſdome, as may inable and fit mee to diſcharge my duty in my place and ſtation, in ſuch a manner as may be to his glory, and 2. Rule.

the good of his people: here my duty is to act Faith upon his Word and Promise absolutely; for the thing I ask, without the least doubting or wavering, for so I am commanded, *James* 1. 5, 6. *If any man lack wisdome, let him ask of God, &c. But let him ask in Faith, nothing wavering.* There is no room for doubting or wavering in such a case as this, in things of this nature.

It is not lawful to doubt or waver, though in some other cases it may be lawful, as hath been already shewed; which hint may give some further light to the right understanding of this text of Scripture, which reacheth not unto all cases, but onely unto cases of this or the like nature.

Instance. A pregnant instance in this case, is that of *Solomon*, 1 Kings 3. 5, 7, 8, 9. Where *Solomon*, from a sense of Gods great goodness in

in calling him to ſo great a place, and of his own great unworthyneſs, and inability to manage the ſame, to Gods glory, and his peoples good. Omitting other things of more private concernment, he makes his requeſt to God for Wiſdome and Underſtanding, ſutable to his place and ſtation, *ver.* 9. *Give therefore thy ſervant an underſtanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may diſcern between good and bad; For who is able to judge this thy ſo great a people?* It being a thing abſolutely good and neceſſary for him, in order to Gods glory, and his peoples good; he asks abſolutely and determinately for this very thing, and no other, in exchange for it, and how acceptable and well pleaſing this requeſt of *Solomon* was in the ſight of the Lord, is ſufficiently declared in the ſtory, *verſ.* 10, 11, 12, 13.

Laſt part of the ſecond Rule.

But in things which are not abſolutely and *per ſe* good and neceſſary for us, but may be good or bad for us upon ſuch variable conſiderations, which are beſt known to God, and about which wee are very apt to miſtake: In all ſuch caſes wee are not to beleeve for the very thing which wee ask, but by Faith to relye upon, and refer our ſelves to the wiſdome of God, for that which hee ſeeth beſt for us.

Neither are we raſhly to conclude, that wee have asked amiſs, and our prayers are not heard, becauſe wee have not the very thing wee deſire; foraſmuch as in all ſuch caſes there is an exerciſe of Faith, in ſubmitting ſuch deſires of ours unto the will of God.

Either *Expreſſed* or *Underſtood*.

1. *Expreſſed:* As in that petition of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,

Mat.

Mat. 26. 39. *O my Father, if it be poſsible let this Cup paſs from mee; nevertheleſs, not as I will, but as thouwilt.* Which exerciſe of his Faith, in ſubmitting to his Fathers will, is yet more vigorous, *v.*42. and *Heb.* 5. 7. 'Tis ſaid, *hee was heard, in that he feared*; for, though hee was not heard in the very thing asked, *viz.* that the Cup might paſs from him; yet he was heard in that, wherein he ſubmitted himſelf to his Fathers will.

2. *Implicite* or *underſtood*, as in that petition of *Paul*, when hee prayed againſt the thorn in the fleſh, that it might depart from him, 2 *Cor*, 12. 8. In which petition queſtionleſs he did exerciſe his Faith, and beleeved, though not poſitively, that hee ſhould have the very thing hee asked; yet that hee ſhould have either that thing, *viz.* the taking away the thorn in his fleſh, or elſe that 1. Inſtance

which

which the Lord at that time ſhould ſee to be better for him, *viz.* a ſufficiency of grace to reſiſt and withſtand it. In which reſpect his petition was granted, *verſ.* 9. And hee ſaid unto mee, *My grace is ſufficient for thee*; which was much better for him at that time, than that it ſhould have departed from him; for hee ſtood in great need of ſuch an exercise at that time. And the thorn in his fleſh, though it was ſharp and grievous to him, was of ſpecial uſe and benefit to him, to keep him humble, and to prevent ſpiritual pride, and ſelf-exaltation after his abundance of Revelations, and high enjoyments, *verſ.* 7. *And leaſt I ſhould be exalted above meaſure, through the abundance of Revelations, there was given to mee a thorn in the fleſh, the meſſenger of Satan to buffet mee, leaſt I ſhould be exalted above meaſure.* Hence

Hence wee may obſerve and learn, that the Lord knoweth how to make uſe of the Saints inbred corruptions, and Satans temptations, for their good and benefit: And therefore when we pray againſt the motions and ſtirrings of inward corruption, and Satans temptations, that they may be taken from us. It ought to be with this *proviſo* and condition expreſſed or implied, if the Lord ſeeth the ſame to be good for us, otherwiſe to have ſuch a ſufficiency of his grace, as may inable us to reſiſt and withſtand them: for though the preſence of ſuch things be as a thorn in our fleſh, *i. e.* very grievous and troubleſome to us; yet thereby many times a greater evil is prevented, *viz.* ſpiritual pride, ſelf-confidence, ſelf-conceitedneſs, *&c.* And though ſuch motions of inbred corruption and tempta-

tions

tions of Satan are ſinful: Yet where they are reſiſted and withſtood by Faith, Prayer, Watchfulneſs, &c. they are not imputed; as the Apoſtle *Paul* teacheth *Rom.* 7. 17. *Now therefore it is no more I that do it, but ſin that dwelleth in mee.* Yea ſuch motions and ſtirrings of the fleſh, and buffetings of Satan, are oft-times given to the children of God in great mercy to prevent a greater evil, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *verſ.* 7. *There was given mee a thorn in the fleſh.*

So that in ſuch caſes Chriſtians may not conclude that their prayers againſt ſuch motions and temptations, are not heard, or that they have not prayed in Faith, becauſe they are not preſently removed and taken away; for there is an exerciſe and work of Faith in ſubmitting ſuch deſires unto the wiſdome and will of God, and

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an anſwer is given to ſuch prayers, though not in the very thing deſired, yet in that which the Lord knoweth to be better for them; as in this caſe of *Paul* is moſt clear; hee prayes, and he prayes earneſtly, and importunately, That the thorn in his fleſh, the meſſenger of Satan, might depart from him, *verſ.* 8. *For this thing I beſought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from mee.* And hee hath his prayer anſwered not in the thing deſired, but in that which was better for him at preſent, *verſ.* 9. *My grace is ſufficient for thee.* The thorn in his fleſh, the buffeting of Satan remaineth, notwithſtanding all his prayers againſt it: and yet his prayer is heard and anſwered, in that hee hath a ſufficient meaſure of grace and ſtrength from Chriſt to reſiſt and withſtand it.

So likewiſe in that caſe of 1. Inſtance

Iſrael

Iſrael in the wilderneſs, whe
being ſtung by the fiery flyi
Serpents, the ſting whereof w
deadly, and by which many dye
they come to *Moſes* with th
requeſt, *Numb.* 21. 7. *Pray u*
the Lord, that hee take away t
Serpents from us. And *Mo*
prayed for the people: An
though hee was not heard in t
very thing asked, *viz.* That t
Serpents ſhould be taken awa
which queſtionleſs they thoug
to be beſt for them; yet was th
prayer anſwered in the lifting
of the Brazen Serpent; whi
upon other conſiderations t
Lord ſaw to be better for the
at that time. So *verſ.* 8. *And t*
Lord ſaid unto Moſes, Make thee
fiery Serpent, and ſet it upon a po
and it ſhall come to paſs, that eve
one that is bitten, when hee looke
upon it ſhall live. Wherein w
exhibited a moſt lively type o

Chri

Chriſt, and of that healing virtue which the children of God do receive from him by Faith, againſt the deadly ſting of ſin. The ſting whereof would bee deadly unto them, as well as unto others, were they not healed by looking unto Jeſus Chriſt, who was lift up for that very end, *Jo.* 3. 14, 15. And whereas many the dear children of God, when they feel this ſting in their conſciences, do pray earneſtly and importunately to have theſe Serpents of their own inbred corruptions, and Satans temptations taken away, that they might never more be ſtung and hurt by them (who though they do well to expreſs their zeal, hatred, and holy indignation againſt ſin, which queſtionleſs is well pleaſing in the ſight of God) yet in praying ſo poſitively and abſolutely to have

theſe

theſe removed, they do not pra
with that underſtanding an
knowledge they ought, neithe
do they therein pray accordin
to the will of God, otherwiſe tha
by an implicite ſubmiſſion, whic
alwaies ought to accompany ſuc
Rom. 8. 24. 25 petitions: But have ſuch praye
1 Joh. 2. 1, 2 anſwered in the remedy vouch
1 Joh. 1. 9 ſafed in Chriſt, which is beſt
all.

Having as briefly as wee w
could, paſſed through theſe v
rious and weighty queſtions,
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ceſſity of Faith in prayer, for t
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hidden ones, whoſe property it
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and have proved what his goo
and acceptable will, and their d
ty is, in all things pertaining to

worſh

worſhip and ſervice; and wherein ſo much of their ſpiritual peace and comfort is bound up, we ſhall proceed to give the reaſons, and then the application of the Point.

There is a neceſſity of Faith in Prayer, becauſe we cannot otherwiſe pray to the Father in the Name of Chriſt; 'tis of abſolute *neceſſity* that wee pray in the Name of Chriſt, otherwiſe our prayers are neither acceptable to God, nor profitable to our ſelves, the acceptance and efficacy of the Saints prayers with God, turn onely upon this hinge, and depend ſolely upon this *ſubſtratum*, that they are offered up in the Name, and by the hand of Chriſt: now if they fail in this, they loſe all their work, which is but loſt labour; prayers without Faith, are prayers without fruit, becauſe they are without Chriſt: that

Reaſ. 1. Joh. 14. 13, 14 1 Pet. 2. 5 Rev. 8. 3, 4

which is Faithleſs, is Chriſtleſs, and therefore muſt needs alſo be fruitleſs, for in him is all our fruit found, *Hoſ.* 14. 8. Wee cannot bear any fruit by any ſpiritual ſervice or ſacrifice wee tender up unto God, but in and through his Son Jeſus Chriſt. Now wee cannot pray in the Name of Chriſt, if wee do not pray in Faith; it is Faith onely that taketh hold of the Name and merits of Jeſus Chriſt, and ſo brings our ſervices unto God by him, *Epheſ.* 3. 12. To pray in the Name of Chriſt, is to pray in the Faith of his Name; we may pray with the Name of Chriſt in our mouths, and yet not pray in his Name, unleſs wee pray with the Faith of Chriſt in our hearts.

And obſerve it as a moſt certain and infallible Rule of interpretation, that where-ever wee are in Scripture commanded to

do,

do, or promiſed to receive any thing in the Name of Chriſt; the meaning is, that wee ſhould do and receive the ſame by Faith in his Name; and not by the bare uſe of his Name in our mouths; and to repoſe any confidence, or lay any ſtreſs upon the bare uſe of the Name of Chriſt in our mouths, any otherwiſe than wee have, and exerciſe the Faith of his Name in our hearts, is to act more like unto Conjurors, than Chriſtians; more like Sorcerers than Saints, *Act.* 19. 13, 14, 15. *Then certain of the vagabond Jews, Exorciſts, took upon them to call over them which had evil ſpirits, the Name of the Lord Jeſus, ſaying, Wee adjure you by Jeſus whom Paul preacheth. And there were ſeven Sons, of one Sceva a Jew, and chief of the Prieſts, which did ſo. And the evil ſpirit anſwered and ſaid, Jeſus I know, and Paul I*

know, but who are yee? And the man in whom the evil ſpirit was, leapt on them, and overcame them, &c. It ſeems by this Scripture, that 'tis a peece of the Myſtical Doctrin of Necromancy, and the practice of ſorcerers, to truſt much to the virtue and power of names; but this is no part of the Doctrine of Chriſtianity, nor the practice of true Chriſtians; they do not expect to prevail with God by the Name of Chriſt in their mouths, but by the Faith of Chriſt in their hearts; here the ſeven Sons of *Sceva* come with the Name of Chriſt in their mouths, thinking as many carnal Chriſtians do, to do great matters by the power of that Name; but wanting the Faith of Chriſt in their hearts, they prevail nothing, but come off with ſhame and confuſion of face, through their miſerable and unexpected

expected diſappointment, and ſo will all thoſe do that truſt to their Carnal Forms, and Lyturgies, and as they ſuppoſe, moſt Excellent, and Abſolute forms of prayers, which they conclude with the Name of Chriſt, which they often, and in vain do take into their mouths, whilſt they have not the Faith of Chriſt in their hearts: To pray with the Name of Chriſt in the mouth, is fruitleſs and vain, where there is not the exerciſe of the Faith of Chriſt in the heart; therefore the exerciſe of Faith in prayer, is of abſolute and indiſpenſible neceſſity.

Becauſe wee cannot otherwiſe pray aright; 'tis the *light of Faith* onely by which the children of God are guided and governed in all the ſpiritual and heavenly exerciſes of Religion; the things of the Spirit, the things of eternity, Reaſ. 2.

are unſeen things, things that are not ſeen by the eye of ſenſe, and natural reaſon; and the light of Faith onely, is that, by which theſe things are ſeen and made manifeſt, *Heb.* 11. 1. *Faith is the evidence of things not ſeen.* No inferiour light can be ſufficient to guide in and about thoſe things that are ſuperiour to it; the light of ſenſe being an inferiour light in man, which is common to him with the brute, is not able to guide him in and about the things of a man, which are proper and peculiar to him as a man: as to argue and diſcourſe, by fit *mediums* conducing to ſuch an end; to meditate upon the works of Creation and Providence; to ſearch out the natural Cauſe and Reaſon of things, &c. To bee guided in, and about ſuch things hee muſt have, and exerciſe the light of Reaſon, which is a ſuperiour

riour light to that of Senſe, and fitted and ſuited by the wiſdom of his creator, and planted in him for ſuch an end.

So alſo the light of naturall Reaſon, which is an inferiour light to that of Faith, cannot guide a man in thoſe actions and things which are Spiritual, ſublime, and above the reach of Nature, depending only upon Divine Revelation. A man by the light of Nature cannot underſtand nor diſcern the things of the Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14.

Now Prayer being a Work of the Spirit, and the things about which wee converſe with God in Prayer, being Spirituall and Heavenly things, depending upon Divine Revelation, upon the teſtimony of the Word and Spirit of God, wee muſt of neceſſity have a ſuperiour light to guide us in thoſe things, *i. e.* the,

light and evidence of Faith; which is a Heavenly gift, from the father of lights, to the children of the Kingdom, by which only, they can converſe with God, and offer up their ſpirituall Sacrifices and ſervices to him in a right manner. And as it is impoſſible for a man to ſee, and hear, and ſmell, and feel, and taſte, without ſenſe, or to meditate, diſcourſe, argue and underſtand the natural cauſe of things, without Reaſon; ſo it is impoſſible for a man to Pray, Hear the Word, Receive the Seals of the Covenant, or perform any other ſpirituall duty, in a right manner without Faith, *Heb.* 11. 6. Hee therefore that prayes without Faith, prayes amiſs, and therefore receives not any fruit of his prayers, *James* 4. 3.

Object. *But may not a man that hath no true Faith, make ſuch a prayer,*

Prayer, which for the matter of it is very good and holy, and ask ſuch petitions as are right and good, and which no man can finde fault with?

Anſw. Wee grant hee may; but yet ſuch an one doth ever ask amiſs; for though he asketh right and good things in prayer, yet the grounds upon which he asketh, and his ends and aims, and the frame of his heart in asking, are rotten and naught; and therefore hee ever asketh amiſs, *Iames 4. 3. Yee ask and have not, becauſe yee ask amiſs*; to ſpend it upon your luſts.

Reaſon and common light may direct a man to ask good and right things of God in prayer; but theſe cannot help him to right grounds, to right ends and aims, and to a right frame of heart in prayer, onely the light of Faith which is influenced by the Spirit and Word of God can do

do this, *Rom.* 8. 26. 27. To pray without the real exerciſe of true Faith, is to pray in vain, becauſe ſo to pray, is to pray amiſs; therefore the exerciſe of Faith in prayer is of abſolute neceſſity.

Reaſ. 3. 3. Becauſe otherwiſe we cannot pray with acceptation; and that is the duty of every Chriſtian, and the excellency of true grace in every duty and holy action, to look unto God as its ultimate and higheſt end, to have its acceptation and approbation from him in all things, 2 *Cor.* 5. 9. *Wherefore wee labour, that whether preſent or abſent, we may be accepted of him.* Now that is the glory of a duty, and that which crowns it with life, ſweetneſs, efficacy, bleſſing and honour, when it comes off with divine acceptation.

And therefore when God the Father would put the greateſt honour

onour upon his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and crown his work with he greateſt glory, he doth it by witneſſing his approbation and cceptation thereof from Hea- en, *Mat.* 3. 17. And again, *Mat.* 8. 5. *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed.* And where this is wanting, wee may write upon our higheſt enjoy- ments and performances [*Icha- od*] *The glory is departed*; the like weetneſs, glory and bleſſedneſs of a duty is loſt, where this is wanting, *Gen.* 4. 5. *Mal.* 1. 10. Now therefore it mainly con- erns us to look unto this in all ur holy ſervices and ſacrifices, hat they may come upon Gods Altar with acceptation; but this annot be without Faith, we can- ot pray with acceptation, if wee o not pray in Faith, *Heb.* 11. 6. *But without Faith it is impoſſible to eaſe him.* And again, *Whatſo-*

ever

ever is not of Faith is ſin. So t
faithleſs prayers (like blinde
lame ſacrifices under the La
Mal. 1.8.) are both unaccepta
and ſinful; upon all which co
derations it doth more than
ficiently appear, that there i
neceſſity of Faith in prayer.

Uſe 1. The opening and diſcov
of this great Goſpel truth, m
be of uſe both to ſinners
Saints, to beleevers and unb
leevers, to formal hypocri
and to ſincere Chriſtians, wh
ther weak or ſtrong.

And firſt by way of Inform
tion; it may ſerve to inform us
three things very needful a
profitable for all men to know.

1. How worthleſs, vile, a
uſeleſs; yea how ſinful and ab
minable the prayers of all unb
leevers, wicked perſons, and fo
mal hypocrites are.

If the efficacy, excellency a
wor

worth of prayer dependeth upon, and is according to the exercise of Faith in it, and Faith be the life, glory, and ſtrength of prayer, as hath been already ſhewed; then how fruitleſs, vile and worthleſs muſt the prayers of all unbeleevers, wicked perſons, and formal hypocrites in the world needs be?

'Tis the manner of wicked perſons, and formal hypocrites, whoſe Religion lyes in a few external ſervices and ceremonies, to glory much in their book-prayers, their ſay-prayers, their form-prayers, which they cry up with as much ſuperſtitious, and blinde zeal, as the *Athenians* did their Goddeſs *Diana*, the image which fell down from *Jupiter*, *Act.* 9. 35. But if wee conſider the perſons, who are the admirers and Authors of ſuch formal ſervices. The viſible Characters

Characters of unbeleef, enm
againſt Chriſt, prophaneneſs,
godlineſs, and hypocriſie, wh
are ſo legible in their hearts a
lives, that hee that runs m
read them; (*For out of the ab
dance of the heart, the mouth ſpe
eth.*) Wee need no more to co
vince and aſſure us, that the b
of ſuch their ſervices are b
worthleſs, vain, and unprofita
things, which God takes no pl
ſure in, and which themſelv
can have no profit or fruit by.
Mal. 1. 10. Where the Lord
Hoſts ſpeaking to a generati
of corrupt and ungodly Prie
and People, who by their unh
lowed and unſanctified courſe
had polluted his Name, and co
rupted his true Worſhip, as a
peareth, *verſ.* 6, 7, 8, 9. Te
them plainly, *verſ.* 10. *I have
pleaſure in you, ſaith the Lord
Hoſts, neither will I accept an off*

ing at your hand. And again, *Iſa.* 1.13. *Bring no more vain oblations, Inceſe is an abomination to mee, the New-Moons, and Sabbaths, the calling of Aſſemblies I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the ſolemn meeting. Your New Moons, and your appointed Feaſts my ſoul hateth, they are a trouble unto mee, I am weary to bear them, and when yee ſpread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: Yea when yee make many prayers, I will not hear; Your hands are full of blood.*

It is marvellous to conſider the admirable wiſdome of the holy Spirit of God in the mouth of this holy Prophet, in cutting aſunder the very ſinews, and caſting down the very bulworks and ſtrong holds of the hypocrites confidence, ripping open their hypocriſie and falſhood to the quick, and caſting moſt contempt and holy diſdain upon thoſe things

things wherein they do moſt o
all glory and boaſt themſelve
Of thoſe things wherein the
deal moſt proudly, doth the ho
ly Spirit ſpeak moſt contemptu
ouſly.

1. Their feſtivals, and ſel
ſanctified holy daies, in the ob
ſervation whereof they place
much of their Religion, and d
ſo confidently bleſs themſelve
how doth the Lord contem
with utmoſt diſdain? and caſt ou
even with loathing and hatred
verſ. 14. *Your New Moons, and yo
appointed Feaſts, my ſoul hateth
they are a trouble unto mee; I a
weary to bear them.*

2. Their ſervice, which a
ſwers to the Sacrifices of old
yea, their offerings and oblation
which they bring and perform
with ſo much carnal devotion
and conteſt for with ſo much
blinde zeal, how doth the Lord
reje

reject and proteſt againſt as moſt hateful and diſpleaſing to his holineſs, and a burden too heavy for him to bear? *verſ.* 13. *Bring no more vain oblations, Incenſe is an abomination unto me, the calling of Aſſemblies I cannot away with; It is iniquity, even the ſolemn meeting.*

Oh what ſhame and confuſion will one day cover the faces of thoſe wicked and ungodly hypocrites? who perſecute, oppreſs, puniſh and condemn the generation of the righteous, becauſe they cannot in conſcience own or joyn with their Idolatrous Aſſemblies? which becauſe of their number, they call ſolemn and publick, when as the Lord himſelf doth reject and diſown them, and calls them iniquity and wickedneſs; not onely wicked, and unjuſt, or ungodly, but wickedneſs, and iniquity, in the abſtract; be-

cauſe it is iniquity under a pre-
tence of Piety; Idolatry and falſe
Worſhip under a pretence o
worſhipping God; ſpiritual wick-
edneſs is the greateſt wickedneſs
becauſe it hath in it the ſpirits o
wickedneſs; *Simulata ſanctita*
(ſaith *Auſtin*) *duplex iniquitas*
quia iniquitas, & quia ſimulati
i. e. feigned ſanctity is doubl
iniquity, both becauſe iniquity
and becauſe feigned.

The Religion of Idolaters an
falſe worſhippers, is their wor
piece; their prophaneneſs, ſwear
ing, curſing, drunkenneſs, exce
of riot, chambering, wantonneſ
fornication, adultery, oppreſſio
cruelty, with all other their fleſh
ly wickedneſs, is bad enough; bu
their Religion, *viz.* Idolatry, Su
perſtition, Will-worſhip, is worſ
of all, and therefore called em
phatically, and by way of emi
nency [ἀκαθάρτον] *i. e. The unclea*
thing

thing, which the Saints of God are forbidden ſo much as to touch, as ever they expect and hope to be received and owned by God in that relation of Adoption: *Wherefore come out from among them, and be yee ſeparate, ſaith the Lord: And touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and be a Father unto you, and yee ſhall be my Sons and my Daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty.* Yea it is called, *the abominable thing which the Lord doth hate*, Jer. 44. 4. *Oh do not this abominable thing that I hate*: Intimating that the holy God hath a ſpecial and peculiar hatred, abomination and deteſtation thereof above all other things.

3. Their formal prayers, which they make and ſay over with much ignorant devotion, with all their [*ſignificant*] Ceremonies attending the ſame; their veſtures

and geſtures, as bowing, cringing, ſpreading forth hands, &c. which hypocrites do ſo much magnifie and applaud, in compariſon whereof they do not only ſlight and diſ-reſpect, but alſo more deſperately, if not maliciouſly reproach and blaſpheme even the bleſſed Spirit of Grace and Supplication; how doth the Lord reject and diſown them? *verſ.* 15. *And when yee ſpread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you. Yea when yee make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood;* ἔνδον τὸ νεκρὸν (as the voice from Heaven to the *Græcian* Tyrant) *i. e. The ſin within,* will certainly fruſtrate and make void all the external ſervices and devotions of ſuch wicked hypocrites. In whom the Scripture is perfectly fulfilled. *Prov.* 28. 9. *Hee that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even*

his prayer ſhall be abomination.

Secondly, This may inform us of the excellency and precious-neſs of true Faith; The excellency and worth of things, is to bee valued by their uſefulneſs, and the more uſefull and neceſſary a thing is, the more excellent and precious it is: Bread-corn, is a more excellent and precious thing than *Bullymong* *, becauſe more uſeful and neceſſary for the ſupport of mans life. And Wiſdome is more excellent and precious than Rubies, becauſe more uſeful for the management of humane affairs. Grace is more excellent than Gifts, and Parts, becauſe more needfull and neceſſary in order to the ſouls eternal welfare. A man may bee ſaved, bee happy, and bleſſed for ever, without Gifts and Parts, but a man cannot be ſaved without Grace, *Joh.* 3. 3. So Faith

* i.e horſe-corn.

is a moſt excellent and precious thing, becauſe ſo abundantly, ſo indiſpenſibly, ſo univerſally uſeful and neceſſary for us, not only in this particular caſe of prayer, but alſo, in all other Spiritual ſacrifices and ſervices, which wee offer up unto God through Chriſt.

In all which reſpects, that Scripture holds moſt true, *Heb. 6.6. Without Faith it is impoſsible to pleaſe God.* Wee judge of the goodneſs and excellency of the Tree, by the goodneſs of the fruit, and of the Cauſe, by the Effects: So the excellency, and preciouſneſs of Faith, is to be diſcerned by the excellent and precious fruits and effects thereof, in the hearts and lives of the precious Saints.

Oh! the great and glorious things which the Saints and ſervants of God have been enabled

and taught to do, by the ſtrength and light of Faith. *Heb.* 11. 33. *Who through Faith ſubdued Kingdomes, wrought righteouſneſs, obtained Promiſes, ſtopped the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of fire, eſcaped the edge of the ſword, out of weakneſs was made ſtrong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the Armies of the Aliens; women received their dead raiſed to life again!* And as the Saints and Servants of God have been enabled to do: So alſo to ſuffer great and ſtrange things by faith, *verſ.* 35. *And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better reſurrection. And others had tryal of cruel mockings and ſcourgings, yea moreover of bonds and impriſonment. They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the ſword; they wandred about in Sheep-skins, and Goat-skins, being*

deſtitute, afflicted, tormented, &c.

Oh the invaluable and incomparable worth and excellency of Faith! which bringeth forth ſuch precious fruits in the hearts and lives of poor, weak, and contemptible men and women! who are ſubject to the ſame paſſions, encompaſſed with the ſame infirmities, liable to the ſame temptations common to mans nature, and yet have been enabled to do and ſuffer ſuch things as are above, and againſt nature; requiring a ſupernatural and divine ability, and all this by the light and ſtrength of Faith; As *verſ.* 39. *All theſe obtained a good report through Faith. Optima ſane arbor, quæ tales habet fructus!* Moſt excellent doubtleſs is that Tree, which brings forth ſuch fruits: *I will ſhew thee my Faith by my works*, ſaith the holy man, *James* 2. 18. Faith is a working

Grace,

Grace, and it worketh like its ſelf. *Operari ſequitur ad eſſe* [*i. e.* the operation and working of things is according to the nature and being of them] is a true principle in nature, and 'tis as true alſo in grace; if therefore the works of Faith be ſo excellent and glorious, oh how excellent then is the nature, the life, and eſſence of this Faith! It was the ſaying of a Heathen Philoſopher, from the obſervation which hee made of the excellent and admirable works and fruits of moral virtue in the lives of ſome Heathens; that if the face and image of virtue could be repreſented to the bodily eye, the beauty and glory thereof would be ſo great, that it would even raviſh the whole world; if the Heathens were ſo much taken with the beauty of morality, becauſe of the excellent fruits and effects thereof

thereof in the lives of ſome Heathens? Oh how much more ſhould Chriſtians be taken with the beauty of Faith and Grace, becauſe of the admirable and precious fruits it hath brought forth in the lives of the Saints! with which the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament do ſo much abound.

Thirdly, This may inform us whence it is, and how it cometh to paſs, that oft-times the prayers even of godly and holy men, fall ſhort of Heaven, and prove not ſucceſsful for themſelves or others, as both Scripture and experience doth teſtifie; even from hence it is, becauſe they do not alwaies pray in Faith; a good man, a precious holy man, may have the grace of Faith in his heart, and yet may want the exerciſe of it, in this or that particular caſe, in this or that particu-

lar

lar ordinance or duty.

Peter had the Grace of Faith in his heart, but wanted the active power and exerciſe thereof in that particular caſe of confeſſing and owning Jeſus Chriſt before men, when he was in the High Prieſts Hall, *Mat.* 26. 70,72,74. *Moſes* and *Aaron* had the grace of Faith, but wanted the energy and exerciſe thereof at the water of *Meribah*, in that particular caſe of bringing forth water out of the Rock, onely by ſpeaking to it. And their want of Faith did appear, in that they ſmote the Rock twice, when they ſhould have but ſpoke unto it, *Numb.* 20, 11,12. *verſes* compared with *verſ.* 8. The Diſciples had the grace of Faith in their hearts, and the gift of the Faith of the miracles, but yet wanted the exerciſe thereof in that particular caſe of the childe poſſeſſed with a dumb

ſpirit,

ſpirit, *Mark* 9. 17, 18, 19. The two Diſciples going to *Emmaus*, had the grace of Faith in their hearts, but wanted the activity and comfort thereof in reference to the death, ſufferings, and reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead, *Luke* 24.25,26,27.

In all which actions thoſe holy men of God miſcarried, and miſſed of their wonted and uſual ſucceſs, becauſe they did not beleeve, *i. e.* they did not exerciſe Faith in thoſe particular caſes wherein the Lord did leave them to themſelves, to try and prove them, that they might more ſenſibly and experimentally know their own weakneſs, and ſo keep a more conſtant dependance upon divine aſſiſtance.

Now as the precious and holy Servants of God (who have nature as well as grace, fleſh as well as Spirit) may miſcarry in other holy

holy actions and duties; ſo alſo in this duty of prayer, ſo far as to miſs of that bleſſed fruit and ſucceſs therein, which at other times they finde; and hence it is, becauſe they do not alwaies pray in Faith, *James* 1, 5,6,7. *If any of you lack wiſdome, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him: But let him ask in Faith, nothing wavering; for hee that wavereth, is like a wave of the Sea, driven with the wind, and toſſed; For let not that man think that hee ſhall receive any thing of the Lord.* The holy man *James* is now ſpeaking unto Saints, unto ſuch as hee ſuppoſed to have the grace of Faith, and yet putting them upon this great duty and work of prayer, and that in a particular caſe for wiſdome to manage their profeſſion as they ought to do, under thoſe tryals and

and temptations which were upon them, which being a thing abſolutely neceſſary for them, and according to the revealed will of God, hee gives them aſſurance to prevail in the very thing asked, *verſ.* 5. *Let him ask of God, &c. And it ſhall be given him*; but ſtill with this *proviſo*, and upon this condition, *that hee ask in Faith*, verſ. 6. *But let him ask in Faith, &c.*

Whence 'tis clear, and the Apoſtle takes it for granted, that ſuch an one as hath true Faith, may yet fail in the exerciſe thereof, in this ordinance and duty of prayer; therefore hee ſaith, *But let him ask in Faith*; intimating that a godly man, a holy man may ask of God in prayer, and yet may not ask in Faith, and thereby miſcarry and loſe all the comfort and fruit of his asking, *verſ.* 7. *Let not that man think that hee ſhall receive*

ceive any thing of the Lord.

This may be for caution and warning to all the people of God; whether they be ſtrong in Faith, or weak in Faith; whether their grace be little or much, to beware and take heed that they neglect not to ſtir up, and put in exerciſe, that grace which they have, as in all other holy duties, ſo eſpecially in this great duty and work of prayer. 2. uſe Caution.

The Exhortation of *Paul* to *Timothy* in reference to his Miniſterial gift, may be applyed to every Chriſtian in reference to his grace, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. *Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou ſtir up the gift that is in thee, by putting on of my hands.* A man may have excellent gifts and parts, and yet the Church of God bee never the better for them, unleſs thoſe gifts be ſtirred up, and kept in exerciſe: Yea a man

man may in time loſe his gifts by neglecting the exerciſe and improvement of them, as *Mat.* 25. 29. *But unto him that hath not* (i. e. exerciſeth and improveth not, as is clear by the ſcope of the Parable) *ſhall be taken away even that which hee hath.* So a man may have true grace, and a very great meaſure of it, and yet may in ſome particular caſes, and under the enjoyment of moſt precious Ordinances, and in the performance of moſt holy duties be altogether fruitleſs and unprofitable, both to himſelf and others, through not exerciſing and ſtirring up the grace which hee hath: Yea hee may (though not utterly loſe) yet greatly weaken and impoveriſh his grace *Rev.* 3. 2.

Joh. 11. 26
1 Joh. 3. 9.
& 5. 18.

O Chriſtian, know, that the life and comfort of thy ſoul under the moſt precious ordinances

and in the performance of holy duties, whether with thy ſelf, or with others, lyeth not ſo much in thy having of true grace, in thy having of Faith, but in the activity of grace, and in the exerciſe of that Faith which thou haſt. Oh therefore beware and take heed that thou neglecteſt not to ſtir up, to keep in exerciſe thy grace, as ever thou deſireſt that thy ſoul ſhould thrive and proſper under the holy ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt, and be filled with joy and peace in beleeving.

The life of Ordinances, the ſweetneſs of the Word and Promiſes, the comfort and fruit of holy duties is loſt, when once the exerciſe of Faith is loſt! take away the exerciſe of Faith out of the heart of a Chriſtian, and what are the moſt pure and powerful ordinances, the moſt ſweet and precious Promiſes, the moſt holy

and heavenly duties, when performed with the greateſt external excellency, but as ſo many empty Pipes, as ſo many broken Ciſterns, which can hold no water?

And therefore it is that the Devil doth ſo induſtriouſly tempt the Saints of God to ſpiritual ſlumber and ſecurity, that ſo hindering the exerciſe of their grace, hee may deprive them of the ſpiritual fruit and comfort of all Gods Ordinances; and thereupon tempt them to doubt and queſtion whether they be his ordinances or no: and at length (if they be not ſincere) prevailes with them to caſt off ordinances as fruitleſs and unprofitable, and to caſt reproach and dirt upon them, whereas indeed the fault is in their own hearts, *Mal.* 3. 14. *Micah* 2. 7. And hereupon hath the Devil taken advantage to ſo

tho

thoſe curſed tares, and corrupt opinions of Non-Ordinances, Ranters, Quakers, &c. all which, though they differ among themſelves, yet do agree in this, to caſt all the dirt and reproach they can upon the precious and heavenly ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt: And this hath the Devil done whilſt Profeſſors were fallen aſleep, and had loſt the life, exerciſe, and activity of their grace, as it is written, *Mat.* 13. 25. *But while men ſlept, his enemy came and ſowed tares among the Wheat.*

The preaching of the Goſpel, it is a moſt precious and powerful Ordinance of Jeſus Chriſt, for the Converſion, Edification, and Salvation of the ſouls of men; but this Goſpel may bee preached clearly, powerfully, and faithfully preached, & yet thoſe unto whom it is preached, have no fruit, no profit by it, for want Act. 26. 18 Eph. 4. 12 Rom. 1. 16

of Faith, *Heb.* 4. 2. *But the Word preached, did not profit them, not being mixed with Faith in them that heard it.* Oh therefore when thou goeſt to hear the Word preached, Chriſtian, beware that thou ſtirreſt up the grace that is in thee, and in particular, this grace of Faith, without which the Word preached will not, cannot profit thy ſoul, though the Apoſtles themſelves, yea though an Angel from Heaven ſhould be the Preacher! The fruit and benefit of the Word preached, doth not depend ſo much upon the grace and gifts of the Miniſter, as upon the Faith of the hearer!

So likewiſe prayer, it is a moſt precious and powerful ordinance of Jeſus Chriſt, for the obtaining of all things that wee ſtand in need of at the hands of God. The text it ſelf ſpeaks ſufficiently

unto

unto this point, *Mat.* 21. 22. *And all things whatſoever yeeſhall aſk in prayer, beleeving, yee ſhall receive.* And upon this very conſideration ſome have called prayer the Key of Heaven; but Faith is the hand which turns this Key. Look therefore as the Key without the hand to turn it is uſeleſs; ſo prayer without Faith is fruitleſs; thou mayeſt therefore, Chriſtian, pray, and bee much in prayer, and yet loſe all thy labour, unleſs thou acteſt thy Faith in prayer; thou mayeſt bring thy Key of prayer to the gate of Heaven, and yet finde it faſt lockt againſt thee, unleſs thou haſt a hand of Faith to turn this Key. Oh therefore beware and take heed that thou neglecteſt not to ſtir up, and exerciſe thy Faith in prayer. Oh how many praying-daies, and faſting-daies have been loſt to the people of

God, for want of Faith? which onely guides us aright in prayer, gives us a right frame of heart, and right ends and aims in prayer, as hath been already ſhewed? 'Tis a great Scripture which wee have in *Zechariah*, to this purpoſe, *Zech.* 7. 5. *When yee faſted and mourned in the fifth and ſeventh month, even theſe ſeventy years, did yee at all faſt unto mee, even unto mee?* Here wee have a praying people, who were abundant and conſtant in this duty for ſeventy years together, and that in the moſt ſolemn and ſtrict manner, joyning faſting with their praying, and yet not accepted of God therein, nor at all profited thereby; and the reaſon is hinted; they did not pray with a right frame of heart; they had not right ends and aims in their prayers; *Did yee faſt at all unto mee, even unto mee?* and whence

was

was it that they thus miſcarried in prayer, and had not true, ſpiritual, holy, and right ends and aims in prayer, but from hence, that they prayed not in Faith; they wanted the light and life of Faith, and were not guided by the Word in their faſting and praying, and ſo praying amiſs, loſt all their labour, *James* 4. 3.

Queſt. *But how doth it appear that they prayed not in Faith?*

Anſw. They looked not unto the word ſpoken by the former Prophets, *verſ.* 7. therefore they prayed not in Faith; 'tis by Faith that wee look unto the Word of God, ſo as to make it our rule; now they obeyed not the Word, and therfore prayed not in Faith.

Oh therefore Chriſtian, beware thou faileſt not in this, in the exerciſe and activity of thy Faith in prayer; thou hadſt better fail in any thing than in this;

thou hadſt better fail in the gift of prayer; thou hadſt better fail of words in prayer; thou hadſt better fail of the wiſdome and excellency of ſpeech in prayer; thou hadſt better fail of affection in prayer, than to fail of Faith in prayer; other defects and infirmities will bee paſſed by and covered, where Faith is active: but all other accompliſhments and ſeeming excellencies, will be deſpiſed where Faith is wanting; 'tis better for a man to want cloathes, and all outward ornaments of the body, than to want life; life is the glory and excellency of the creature; the pooreſt and moſt contemptible creature which hath life, is more excellent than the moſt glorious creature that wants it; hence ſaith *Solomon*, *A living Dog is better than a dead Lion.* Faith is the life of prayer, the glory, the excellency,

Jam. 5.17.
Heb. 11.6.

cy, the ſtrength of Prayer; Other things are but the Ornaments of Prayer: Oh Chriſtian! look not ſo much to the Ornaments, as to the Life of thy holy duties, leſt God reject them as a dead carcaſſe.

Thirdly, This may bee profitable for Exhortation, 3 Uſe Exhortation.

1 Unto Sinners.

If there bee ſuch a neceſſity of Faith in Prayer, that without it wee cannot Pray, either acceptably to God, or profitably to our ſelves or others, as hath been at large declared and proved; then doth it nearly concern every ſoul yet in the ſtate of Nature, and ſhut up, or concluded under unbelief (as all unregenerate perſons are, whether they bee Jews or Gentiles, Chriſtians or Heathens, Prophane perſons or Profeſſors, *Rom.* 11.32. *chap.* 3.9.) to get out of that condition, and to labour for true ſaving Faith in Chriſt.

'Tis

'Tis true, Faith is a Heaven-born Grace, which grows not in
Joh. 5.40. Eph. 2.8 Natures Garden, 'tis neither in the freedom of mans will to deſire, nor in the ability of his power, to work Grace, to produce and bring forth a work of true Saving Faith in himſelf: but as the Apoſtle teacheth, *Phil.* 2. 13. *It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good pleaſure.* Nevertheleſs, Sin-
Mat. 7. 7. Joh. 6. 27. Phil. 1. 12. ner, it is thy duty to ſtrive in the uſe of all holy means, and to look up unto God, through Chriſt, both to incline thy will and to give thee power from heaven, to do his will. The Miller cannot command a wind but hee can ſpread the Sails, and wait upon the Providence of God for a gale; *The wind bloweth where it liſteth, ſo is every one that is born of the Spirit,* Joh. 3. 8. And if thou deſireſt to bee born

gain, thou muſt wait for thoſe gales, and thou muſt wait in the uſe of means: And there is a bleſſing promiſed to them that do ſo, *Prov.* 8.34,35. The Huſband-man cannot command the Clouds, but hee may obſerve the ſeaſon, prepare the Earth, and ſow the precious ſeed, and then patiently wait for the early and the latter Rain, and he finds at Harveſt, his labour is not in vain. Jam. 5.7.

There is a connexion, though not of Cauſality, yet of Inſtrumentality, of the end to the means, of mercy to duty, of priviledge to practiſe, of the Harveſt to the Seed-time; of Glory to Grace, of Grace to the means of Grace; As ever therefore thou wouldeſt attain the end, which is Salvation, thou muſt uſe the means: Hee that will aſcend to the laſt, or higheſt ſtaffe of the Lad-

Ladder muſt begin at the firſt.

O therefore, gratifie not t
Devil, and thy own unregene
will, with ſuch cavilling, a
ſhifting, but ſet upon the wo
in good earneſt; up and bee d
ing, and the Lord ſhall bee wi
thee. And aſſure thy ſelf, thoug
it may prove difficult and ha
labour, yet it will not prove lo
labour, *John* 6. 27. *Labour n*
for the meat which periſheth, b
for that meat which endureth un
everlaſting life.

Object. *But perhaps the Sin*
ner will ſay, How ſhall I come by it
How ſhall I obtain it? What a
ſurance have I, that if I labour f
this meat, I ſhall have any fruit o
my labour?

Anſw. O yes, there is a bleſ-
ſed promiſe joyned to this com-
mand, hee that bids thee labour,
doth promiſe thee thy labor ſhall
not be in vain; and therefore it

s added; *Which the Son of man hall give unto you, for him hath God the Father ſealed.* Oh ſinner, know, that God the Father hath ſealed, *i.e.* ordained and anointed Jeſus Chriſt, and conſtituted him under the broad Seal of Heaven, to be the Mediator of the everlaſting Covenant, and to diſpenſe and give out all the ſpiritual and heavenly gifts and bleſſings thereof, unto all ſuch as the Father hath given to him, and by virtue of that donation ſhall come to him, *Joh.* 17. 2. *As thou haſt given him power over all fleſh, that hee ſhould give eternal life to as many as thou haſt given him.*

Object. *But thou wilt ſay, how ſhall I know whether I bee one of thoſe whom the Father hath given to Jeſus Chriſt? And that if I do come unto him, I ſhall be received? Oh I am afraid that Jeſus Chriſt will*

will not receive ſuch a ſinner as I am, ſuch a wretch as I am; I am ſo vile and wretched, that I feare hee will rather reject and caſt me out as a Reprobate, as a veſſel of wrath, than receive mee unto grace and favour.

Anſw. Thou ſhalt know that thou art one of thoſe, whom the Father hath given to Chriſt, by thy coming to him, and cloſing with him in the Word of the Goſpel; for none but ſuch can
Joh. 6. 44. poſſibly come to him, ſo as to receive life from him; thou canſt not know before-hand that thou art given by the Father to Jeſus Chriſt, but thou muſt firſt come unto Chriſt; and then thou mayeſt know that the Father hath given thee to him, and if thou comeſt unto Jeſus Chriſt, hee hath aſſured thee in his Word, that hee will not reject thee, hee will not caſt thee out

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how vile or wretched ſoever thou beeſt, *Joh. 6. 37. All that the Father giveth mee ſhall come to mee, and him that cometh unto mee, I will in no wiſe caſt out.* Oh it is a bleſſed word; [*In no wiſe, in no wiſe caſt out*] what-ever thy cauſe or condition be, though never ſo deſperate in thine own eye, yet if thou comeſt unto him, he will in no wiſe caſt thee out.

And thou haſt the bleſſed preſidents and experiences of many great ſinners, who upon repentance, and coming unto Jeſus Chriſt by Faith, have obtained mercy, and are now glorified Saints in Heaven; witneſs *Manaſſeh*, who uſed witchcraft and inchantments, who ſhed much innocent blood, and filled *Jeruſalem* with blood, and made a whole Nation to ſin, and yet when in his affliction he humbled himſelf greatly, and ſought unto the

the Lord, hee obtained mercy, and hee that had been before a wicked Necromancer, a Sorcerer, a Murderer, an abominable Idolater, hath now obtained mercy, becomes a New Creature, old things are paſſed away with him, and all things are become new, 2 *Chron.* 33. 1, --- 20. *Mary*

Mark 16. 9 Luke 8. 2 *Magdalen* was a very great ſinner, out of whom Chriſt had caſt ſeven Devils, and yet ſhee obtained mercy, and when ſhe came unto Jeſus Chriſt, hee did not caſt her out: So likewiſe *Paul* was a great ſinner before Converſion, a perſecutor, a blaſphemer, and injurious, and yet hee obtained mercy, 1 *Tim.* 1. 1.

And wherefore did the Lord ſingle out theſe great and chief ſinners, and make them objects of his ſaving grace and favour, but that in them hee might exhibit a pattern of his glorious

grace

grace, for the encouragement of other great ſinners (not to continue in ſin, with a preſumption of finding mercy at the laſt) but to repent, and turn, and come in to his Son Jeſus Chriſt, that they may be ſaved; So 1 *Tim.* 1. 16. *Howbeit (ſaith Paul) for this cauſe I obtained mercy, that in mee firſt Jeſus Chriſt might ſhew forth all long ſuffering for a pattern to them, which ſhould hereafter beleeve on him to life everlaſting.*

And this know, poor ſinner, *that Jeſus Chriſt came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance*; oh therefore be not diſcouraged, becauſe thou art a ſinner, but hearken to the call of Chriſt, in the voice of the Goſpel, and know, that thou art called this day by this word of Exhortation; to labour for Faith in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ſo thou mayeſt be in a capacity of

perſorming this holy duty of prayer, and other holy duties, ſo
Heb. 11.6 as to pleaſe God in the doing of them, which without Faith thou canſt not do.

Obj. *But what ſhall I do in the mean time? ſhall I neglect prayer, becauſe I cannot in my natural and unbeleeving eſtate pleaſe God in what I do?*

Anſw. No, oh no, thou art commanded to pray, to call upon the Name of the Lord; prayer is a natural duty, written upon every mans conſcience; the obligation whereof cannot bee diſpenſed with, by any power, or under any pretence whatſoever; thou muſt not therefore caſt off prayer, that ſo thou mayeſt continue in thy ſin and unbeleef; but thou muſt caſt off thy ſin and beleeve in Jeſus Chriſt, that ſo thou mayeſt continue in prayer, which if thou neglecteſt, thou art guilty

of

of a three-fold Robbery.

1. Thou robbeſt God of his glory.

2. Thy own ſoul, body and family of the mercy.

3. Thy Neighbour of the charity of thy prayers.

Simon Magus was in the gall of bitterneſs, and yet *Peter* bids him pray, *Act.* 22. 23. But withall hee bids him repent alſo: *Repent therefore of this thy wickedneſs, and pray to God.* Therefore a wicked man, a man in the gall of bitterneſs muſt pray. But withall hee muſt repent of his wickedneſs, and beleeve, that through Chriſt Jeſus, remiſſion and forgiveneſs of his ſin, may be obtained; and upon this ground of Repentance and Faith in Chriſt, the Apoſtle bids him to pray: *If peradventure, or perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.*

Secondly, Unto Saints.

Oh yee precious Saints of God, who have this precious Faith, this precious ſeed of God beſtowed upon you in Jeſus Chriſt, to whom it is given to beleeve in the name of Jeſus; unto you doth this word of exhortation ſpeak, as unto Sons and Daughters. Oh be not faithleſs, but beleeving, exert, and put forth this Heaven-born principle and ſeed of Faith into exerciſe; let it not lye by you as a dead drug, when there is ſuch quick trading at the throne of Grace. Great Merchants will empty their Ware-houſes, and bring forth their richeſt commodity when they have a quick trade, when the wants and neceſſities of their own or other Countries, do give them advantage to put off with greater profit; they will uſe the utmoſt diligence

gence and induſtry, and will lay out themſelves to the utmoſt; they will venture all their ſtock, engage all their credit, improve all their intereſt in ſuch a ſeaſon: Shall men be ſo wiſe for earth, and ſhall not the children of the Kingdome be as wiſe for Heaven?

O yee Saints of God, yee are the heavenly Merchants; who onely have this trade in your hands; yee have intereſt in the heavenly Country, and ye have a Factor there, who is both able and faithful, who will not fail to put off your prayers with the beſt advantage, and procure you returns in the richeſt and beſt things of the Country, which ſhall beſt anſwer your intereſt and profit here on earth. And now yee have a moſt precious ſeaſon.

1. The wants and neceſſities of three great Nations (whereof

your ſelves are a part, and in the peace whereof your peace is bound up) do call aloud for the help of your prayers, being under as great ſymptomes and tokens of divine diſpleaſure, and under as black a cloud of ſtormy wrath, as any Nation wee read of in all the Word of God; ſearch the Scriptures, and take a catalogue of all the characters and marks expreſſed there of a generation marked out for vengeance; and try if they be not all found upon this generation, this one excepted. That the Lord of Hoſts hath reſerved unto himſelf a remnant. And can you ſee all this and be ſilent? have yee not ſo much charity, ſo much bowels of compaſſion for your native
Gen. 18.22 Country, your children and poſterity, as *Abraham* had for *Sodom?* as *Lot* for *Zoar?*

2. The deſolations of Mount

Zion,

Zion, the captivity of Gods Ark, the afflictions and troubles that are accompliſhed in your dear brethren, who are like ſheep appointed for the ſlaughter, do call aloud for your moſt fervent prayers, and ſtrong cryes, to bee ſent up to Heaven inceſſantly, & that you give the Lord no reſt till hee doth ariſe, and have mercy upon *Zion*, and turn the captivity of his people as ſtreams in the South: Can yee bee at eaſe in *Zion*, and not regard the afflictions of *Joſeph*? Can yee behold *Zion* in travel, yea crying out, and in pangs, to be delivered, and not lend a helping hand?

3. The ruinous caſe and condition of thouſands of precious ſouls, who are like to periſh for want of viſion, to ſtarve for want of the bread of life; who wander from mountain to hill to ſeek the Word of the Lord, and can-

not finde it; who cry out for bread, and behold ſtones are given them inſtead of bread, who ask for fiſh, but are fed with Scorpions; who ſeek water, but finde none, and their tongue faileth for thirſt; do alſo in their deep miſery and diſtreſs cry out and call aloud to you; oh pray the Lord of the harveſt, that he would ſend forth labourers, & drive out loiterers; that hee would raiſe up unto us a ſoul-ſearching & a ſoul-ſaving Miniſtry, and take away from us the heavy ſcourge and plague of a ſoul-murdering, blind and ſuperſtitious Clergy; for where the blind lead the blind, both muſt fall into the ditch.

Oh yee Saints of God, who only know the worth of ſouls, who only can be truly ſenſible of ſpiritual evils, and know both the worth and want of a true Goſpel-Miniſtry; can ye be ſilent and ſee ſuch

ſuch merchandize made of the ſouls of men, by the greedy Merchants of *Babylon*? Never was there a time, from the foundation of the world, in which the Saints had more advantage of doing great and eminent ſervice by prayer for the poor Nations of the earth, and for their dear brethren in ſufferings, and for the ſouls of men! yea and for the whole Creation, than at this day! In which the Nations of the earth are ſo greatly diſtreſſed, the minds of men perplexed, and their hearts even failing them for fear, and for looking after the things that are coming to paſs on the earth; yea *the whole Creation groaneth and travelleth in pain, deſiring to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.* In which *Zions* conſolation, and *Babylons* confuſion greatly haſteneth; the time

time of *Babels* Tyranny, and the Saints captivity, is ſo near fulfilled, and the times of refreſhing a coming from the preſence of the Lord, and the time of the reſtitution of all things: Oh ye Saints of God know that this is a precious ſeaſon; let but your prayers meet together in the Angels hand, who ſtands before the Altar to offer them up with his own Incenſe, and then great and marvellous things will be done in the earth, *Rev.* 8. 3, 4, 5.

The

THE Efficacy of FAITH IN PRAYER.

Matthew 21. 22.

And all things whatsoever yee shall ask in Prayer, beleeving, yee shall receive,

THe next thing observable in the Text, and propoſed to be handled in this Treatiſe, is

The Efficacy of Faith in Prayer.

Faith is a plenipotentiary grace, it hath a kind of omnipotency in it, it cometh with a full commiſſion,

ſion from Heaven, to the poor Diſciples of Chriſt on earth, by which they may do and obtain great things with God; yea all things whatſoever they ſhall aſk in prayer, they ſhall obtain by Faith. The great God of Heaven will not, cannot deny any thing to his poor ſervants here on earth, which they aſk in Faith. Hee is faithful who hath promiſed, and cannot deny himſelf; the word is gone out of his mouth in righteouſneſs, and hee will not repent, hee will not call it in again. *And all things whatſoever yee ſhall aſk in prayer, beleeving, yee ſhall receive.*

Oh here is a large commiſſion indeed! *All things! and all things whatſoever.* Here are no limits, no bounds ſet to Faith in prayer! Faith may aſk what it will, and have what it aſks at the hand of God! Faith

can

can but ask and have! Faith doth but ſpeak the word on Earth, and it is done in Heaven! the truth is, Faith is a modeſt grace, a prudent, wiſe and ſober grace, that looketh at the will of God as her Rule, and the glory of God as her ultimate end and aim in all things, and therefore will not, cannot deſire or ask any thing contrary to Gods moſt holy will, or croſs to, and inconſiſtent with his glory; and therefore Faith hath the Key of Heaven committed to her, and may go to the heap of mercy, and take even what ſhee will, *Mat.* 15. 28. *O Woman great is thy Faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt.*

The Efficacy of Faith in prayer, and the mighty prevailing power it hath with God, is ſufficiently made manifeſt.

1. In the truth of Gods moſt holy Word and Promiſes.

2. In

2. In the Saints moſt precious and conſtant Experiences.

1. The truth of Gods holy word and promiſes.

The truth of Gods moſt holy Word and Promiſes, do abundantly atteſt and bear witneſs to the mighty efficacy of Faith in prayer; great things are promiſed, yea all things are promiſed to the prayers of Faith. So in the Text: *And all things whatſoever yee ſhall ask in prayer, beleeving yee ſhall receive.*

This is the Word of Chriſt, this is a gracious Promiſe of Jeſus Chriſt to his Diſciples here on earth, and hee will be as good as his word; hee is the faithful witneſs, and the truth it ſelf, and therefore hee cannot lye, he can as well ceaſe to be God, as ceaſe to be true and faithful in his Word and Promiſes, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. *For all the Promiſes of God in him are Yea, and in him Amen,* [*i. e.* truth and aſſurance, or moſt

ſure

ſure and ſtedfaſt] *unto the glory of God by us*; So that God ſtands upon the truth of his Word and Promiſes, as a great part of his glory, and hee will have the glory of his truth, what-ever comes of it, hee will appear to be true in his Word and Promiſes, yea in all his Promiſes to a jot and tittle, there ſhall not the leaſt jot or tittle thereof fail, till all be fulfilled, *Mat.* 5. 18. *For verily I ſay unto you, till Heaven and Earth paſs, one jot, or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the Law, till all bee fulfilled*: As if the Lord had ſaid, yee are apt to ſet light by my Word, to queſtion and doubt of the truth and certainty thereof; but I aſſure you, I ſtand ſo much upon my Word, to have it fulfilled and made good to the utmoſt, that if Heaven and Earth lay in one ſcale, and the leaſt iota or tittle

of

of my Word in the other, I would rather suffer Heaven and Earth (*i. e.* the whole Creation) to perish and come to nothing, than that the least iota or title of my Word should fail, till all be fulfilled. So wonderfully doth the God of Truth stand upon his glory in this respect; therefore all the Promises of God in him (*i. e.* in Christ) are yea, and in him amen, because this is for the glory of God, to be as good as his word, and not to falsifie, but to fulfill all his Promises.

Now many exceeding great and precious promises hath God made in Christ unto his people, praying in Faith, or exercising Faith in prayer. Wee shall instance in one or two, in liew of all the rest; which being added to this of the Text, may bee sufficient to give a full testimony to the truth in hand; that so in the mouth

mouth of two or three witneſſes, this word may bee eſtabliſhed.

The firſt that we ſhall inſtance in, is, that great Charter of heaven, or promiſe made to the poor afflicted, tempted, and deſpiſed Saints, and Churches of Chriſt here on earth, *Mat.* 18. 19. *Again, I ſay unto you, that if two of you ſhall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they ſhall ask, it ſhall bee done for them of my Father which is in Heaven.*

The number of true Diſciples is in many places very ſmall, it may bee two of a Family, and one of a Tribe; and the true Churches of Chriſt, are for the moſt part but ſmall, and few in number: eſpecially compared with the falſe Church, and Churches of Antichriſt, the Whore that ſitteth upon many Waters, *Rev.* 17. 15. But O yee Saints and Churches of Jeſus Chriſt, let not

the paucity, and ſmalneſs of your number diſcourage you, though the malice and rage of the ungodly, may like the great water-floods, keep good Neighbors one from another, ſo that ye cannot aſſemble and meet together in that ſolemn and publick manner as yee could deſire: yet bee not diſcouraged, do not think the Efficacy and ſtrength of Prayer, is thereby ſo diminiſhed, or weakned, that yee cannot prevail in
Col 2 5 Heaven: *You may bee preſent in Spirit, when abſent in body.* Your Prayers may meet in Heaven, when your perſons cannot meet
Rev. 8.3 upon Earth. *You may bee caſt into Priſons, and Dungeons,* you may bee ſcattered, and wander in the deſart places, in the dens and caves of the earth, but here is your comfort, Heaven is ſtill open.

And let mee tell you from this

this Scripture; yee may do and obtain great things in Heaven (*If two of you ſhall agree on earth, as touching any thing they ſhall ask. it ſhall be done for you in Heaven.*) *If two of you ſhall agree*; 'tis not meant in a way of worldly policy, and carnal contrivance, but in a way of ſpiritual harmony and conſent of ſoul ariſing from the unity of Faith, and the anointing of the Spirit, teaching and guiding you in prayer, to ask thoſe things which are according to the will of God: let the thing be what it will, ask it in the Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath; let it be never ſo hard and difficult, and in the eye of ſenſe and reaſon even impoſſible, yet it ſhall certainly be done for you, and granted in Heaven. Oh what a bleſſed charter! what a glorious liberty is this, granted to the children of God, that by Faith

Rom 8.26. 27

in prayer here on earth, they may have any thing, even what they will, done for them in Heaven!

And this is the priviledge of all thoſe little ones, that beleeve in Chriſt, *Mat.* 18. 10. and 14. compared with *verſ.* 19, 20. This is not the priviledge of old Fathers, and ſtrong men onely, but even of babes in Chriſt, ſuch as are little ones, little in the worlds account, and it may be little in the eye of other Saints, but leaſt of all in their own eye; yet theſe little ones that beleeve in Chriſt, how contemptible, little and low ſoever they be on earth, are honourable, great and high in Heaven, and may do ſuch things by Faith in prayer, as the greateſt Monarchs and Princes upon Earth cannot do by their greateſt force and power: As will further appear in the ſecond Scripture and word of Promiſe, which

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for the proof the point, wee ſhall alſo a little inſiſt upon.

Iſaiah 45. 11. *Thus ſaith the Lord, the holy one of Iſrael, and his Maker. Ask mee of things to come, concerning my Sons, and concerning the work of my hands, command yee mee.* Oh the admirable and infinite condeſcention of the great *Jehovah!* who hath created the Heavens, and formed the Earth, and commandeth all the hoſts of them! That hee who commandeth Angels, and ruleth in the Armies of Heaven; and in the Kingdomes of men, ſhould ſuffer himſelf to be commanded by a hand-full of poor praying-ſouls here on earth! and to have ſuch power in Heaven, as to command and diſpoſe of the great works of providence; yea the choiſeſt and moſt admirable operations thereof, which for their rarity and excellency are (by way of emi-

nency) the works of Gods hands (as the *Egyptian* Magicians ſaid of that rare and admirable work of Gods ſingular power and providence, in turning all the duſt of the Land of *Egypt* into Lice at the word of his ſervant *Moſes*, which the Magicians could not do by their inchantments, *Exod.* 8. 19. *This is the finger of God!*) Yet ſo it is, that a hand-full of Gods praying *Iſrael*, which come in Faith, to enquire and ask of God concerning his Sons and Daughters, may even command what they will, may ask and have the greateſt mercies, the moſt ſignal deliverances, and the moſt wonderful revolutions of providence that the hands, *i. e.* the infinite power of God is able to produce, and bring to paſs. As that was a moſt wonderful revolution of providence, that cauſed even all the earth to ſtand amazed,

mazed, even the ſudden and unexpected downfall of the mighty Kingdome of *Babylon*, in order to the ſalvation and deliverance of Gods Church and people, who there were holden in ſo ſtrong captivity, *Iſa.* 14. from the 3. *v.* to the 28.

Oh ye precious praying-ſouls, upon whom the Lord hath poured out the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication, that yee may ſee him whom yee have pierced, and mourn and be in bitterneſs for your own ſins, and the ſins of the Nation; mourning even every family apart, the men apart, and their wives apart. Oh know, that if yee come with an humble ſenſe of your own, and the Nations ſins, and with Faith in God through Jeſus Chriſt, to plead his precious promiſes, and ask of him things to come concerning his Sons and Daughters, ye may

Zech. 12. 10, 11, 12

even *command* what yee will (if it be a work of Gods hands, which hee hath decreed in Heaven, and declared on Earth to bring to paſs in due time, as hee hath the
Rev. 18. 2 confuſion of myſtical *Babylon*, and ſalvation of his ſpiritual *Zion*) I ſay, if it be a work of his hands, *i.e.* within the power of his glorious arm, and infinite wiſdome, to effect, as moſt certainly all things propheſied and fore-told in the Word of God are; then ye need not to ſtagger, ye need not to heſitate about the matter, either becauſe of your own unworthineſs, or the great amazing difficulties in the way of the promiſe; but come boldly to the throne of grace, and ask in Faith, and there is nothing in Heaven or Earth too good or too great for God to do for you; ask and ſpare not, yea ſpeak the word and it ſhall be done, command with an humble boldneſs,

boldneſs, and it ſhall be brought forth; ask it in the Heaven above, or in the earth beneath; amongſt all the glorious works and operations of Gods hands, chuſe where yee will, ask what yee will, and it ſhall be done for you. *Ask mee things to come concerning my Sons, and concerning the works of my hands, command yee mee.*

The moſt precious and conſtant experiences of the Saints and ſervants of God in all ages and generations of the world do alſo abundantly. declare the mighty prevailing power and efficacy of Faith in prayer; by which

2. In the Saints experiences.

1. They have prevailed with God for the turning away of his fierce wrath and anger from ungodly Nations, who had provoked him greatly, and yet periſhed not, becauſe ſome of Gods faithful

faithful ſervants ſtood up in the gap, and made interceſſion for them.

Thus holy *Moſes* prevaileth with God for *Iſrael*, when they provoked him to wrath with their own inventions, and turned the glory of God into the ſimilitude of a Calf that eateth Hay, *Exod.* 32. 7. *And the Lord ſaid unto Moſes, Go get thee down, for the people which thou broughteſt out of the Land of Egypt, have corrupted themſelves; they have turned aſide quickly out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten Calf, and have worſhipped it, &c.* And *verſ.* 10. *Now therefore, let mee alone, that my wrath may wax hot againſt them, and that I may conſume them, and I will make of thee a great Nation.*

Here is an ungodly and unthankful Nation, that have greatly provoked the Lord by their Idolatry

Idolatry and Apoſtacy, after all thoſe wonders of mercy, which hee had wrought for them in *Egypt*, and at the Red Sea, which was a great aggravation of their wickedneſs, that they ſo quickly forgat God their Saviour, and turned aſide to other Gods, and gave the glory of all their deliverances and ſalvations, which *Jehovah* had wrought for them, unto a baſe, deteſtable Idol, the Image of a Calf that eateth Hay: So *verſ.* 8. *They have made a Molten Calf, and worſhipped it, and have ſacrificed thereunto, and ſaid, Theſe be thy Gods, O Iſrael, which have brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt.*

And here wee have a jealous, offended and provoked God, appearing upon the Mount to *Moſes* as conſuming fire, taking up thoughts of wrath and indignation againſt *Iſrael* even to their

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utter deſtruction and confuſion: *Now therefore, let mee alone, that my wrath may wax hot againſt them, and that I may conſume them, and I will make of thee a great Nation.*

But withall, behold a wonder of infinite condeſcention, *God ſtooping to man, the great Jehovah* courting and intreating a poor, weak, ſinful man, to be ſilent, and let him alone in the progreſs and execution of his anger againſt *Iſrael*! *Let mee alone, that my wrath may wax hot againſt them*: As if *Moſes*'s prayers did tye up the hands of God, ſo that hee could not do any thing againſt *Iſrael*, without *Moſes*'s leave!

Oh that a poor ſinful man, as *Moſes* was, ſhould have ſuch power with the great and holy God! yet ſuch is the efficacy of Faith in prayer, that God will not,

not, cannot do any thing againſt the prayers of his people, when they ask in Faith.

But now doth *Moſes* let God alone, and ceaſe to pray, and make interceſſion for *Iſrael?* is *Moſes* content to accept the promiſed increaſe of his own private family, with ſo great diſhonour to the Name of God, and the univerſal ruine of his Church and People? No verily: The Faith and Zeal of this holy man *Moſes*, like a mighty fire, being a little reſtrained, breaketh forth into the greater flames. And hee ſets upon the work of prayer and interceſſion for *Iſrael* with the more Faith and fervent Zeal, *verſ.* 12, 13. *And Moſes beſought the Lord his God, and ſaid; Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot againſt thy People, which thou haſt brought forth out of the Land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore*

Wherefore ſhould the Egyptians ſpeak and ſay, for miſchief did he bring them out, to ſlay them in the mountains, and to conſume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil againſt thy People. Remember Abraham, Iſaac and Iſrael thy ſervants, to whom thou ſwareſt by thine own ſelf, and ſaidſt unto them, I will multiply your ſeed as the ſtars of Heaven, and all this Land that I have ſpoken of, will I give unto your ſeed, and they ſhall inherit it for ever.

Oh here is a prayer of Faith indeed! here is much Faith acted by *Moſes* in this prayer; looking to the Word and Promiſe of God made to *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, as his rule in asking, and the glory of the Name of God, as his great and ultimate end, and by good argument and ſtrength of reaſon ſhewing, that

to

to execute his fierce wrath in consuming his people, would neither consist with his Covenant and Promise, nor with the glory of his own great Name, and therefore prayes the Lord to turn from his fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against his people.

And by this prayer of Faith he prevails with God, and delivers *Israel* from that consuming wrath and anger of God that was kindled against them, so that they perished not in their iniquity, as *vers.* 14. *And the Lord repented of the evil which hee thought to do unto his people.*

Which famous prayer and intercession of *Moses* is recorded in the book of *Psalms*, and mentioned as the onely means of *Israels* preservation from the consuming power of *Jehovahs* great wrath and fierce anger, *Psal.* 106, 23.

Therefore

Therefore hee ſaid that hee would deſtroy them; had not Moſes his choſen ſtood before him in the breach to turn away his wrath leſt he ſhould deſtroy them.

Oh the prevailing power and efficacy of Faith in prayer! that by one prayer of Faith, a whole Nation ſhould be delivered from ſo great a ruine!

2. Inſtance Thus alſo righteous *Lot* by one prayer of Faith delivered *Zoar* from the common deſtruction and overthrow of *Sodom* & *Gomorrah*, that very morning when fire was ready to come down from Heaven to deſtroy thoſe Cities, *Gen.* 19. 18. *And Lot ſaid unto them, oh not ſo my Lord, Behold now thy ſervant hath found grace in thy ſight, and thou haſt magnified thy mercy which thou haſt ſhewed unto mee in ſaving my life, and I cannot eſcape to the mountain, leſt ſome evil take mee and I dye. Behold*

now

now, this City is near to flee unto, and it is a little one. O let me escape thither (is it not a little one) and my soul shall live.

This prayer of *Lot* was not without ſome viſible tincture of humane frailty, and weakneſs of Faith, wherein hee offended in that hee accepted not the place which the Lord had appointed, but chuſeth another, aſcribing more to the place, than to the power and good pleaſure of God for his protection. Nevertheleſs it being a prayer of Faith, in which there was a real exerciſe of Faith, in that hee beleeved God was able to ſpare *Zoar*, and to make it a means of his preſervation and more comfortable living than the deſolate mountain, and therefore prayes that the Lord would not ſend him to the mountain, but rather let him flee to *Zoar*. In which prayer holy

Lot was queſtionleſs guided by the Spirit of God, to ask the preſervation of that City, which though viſibly threatned, and in danger to be deſtroyed with the reſt, yet was in reſpect of Gods ſecret will and purpoſe, to be preſerved, and therefore the Lord did by his holy Spirit put it into the heart of his righteous ſervant *Lot*, to ask that City: In which requeſt he is preſently accepted, and the life of that City granted at his petition, *verſ.* 21. *And he ſaid unto him: ſee, I have accepted thee concerning this thing, that I will not overthrow this City for the which thou haſt ſpoken: Haſte thee, eſcape thither, for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither; therefore the Name of that City was called Zoar.*

Oh the infinite and admirable condeſcention of the great and holy God to the weakneſs of a poor

poor frail man! that *Lot* ſhould not accept the mountain which the Lord appointed him, and yet that the *Lord* ſhould accept *Lot*, and ſpare *Zoar* which he had ſpoken for! yet ſuch is the holy indulgence of the heavenly Father to his praying children, that when through humane frailty, they cannot come up to his terms, hee out of divine pity ſtoops and comes down to theirs! and ſuch is the efficacy & prevailing force of Faith in prayer, that God is even overcome thereby to grant his poor praying ſervants even what they will! *verſ.* 21. *See I have accepted thee concerning this thing, that I will not overthrow this City, for the which thou haſt ſpoken:* Oh well was it for *Zoar* that *Lot* ſpoke to God for it! The prayer of one juſt *Lot* delivers this wicked City from the common calamity and deſtru-

ction of their fellow-sinners!

2. The Saints and servants of God have prevailed by Faith in prayer for the pulling down most speedy vengeance, and just judgements of God upon their malicious and ungodly enemies.

Thus zealous *Elijah* by prayer brings down fire from Heaven upon the heads of his proud and malicious enemies (two several Captains and their fifties) who in the pride and heat of their spirits, came to do violence to the good Prophet, 2 *King.* 1. 9, 10, 11, 12, until by these examples of Gods severity, the rest of that wicked party were reduced to some submission and moderation towards his faithful servant, who in prophecying the death of the King of *Samaria*, had not offended, but done that which he was commanded, and allowed of God to do.

And

And the ſame holy man, *Elijah* by prayer prevails with God to ſhut the Heavens, that it rained not for three years and ſix months, ſo that wicked *Ahab*, *Jezabel*, and the ten Tribes were for their Idolatry, and perſecution of Gods faithful ſervants, juſtly plagued with a three years famine. 1 *King.* 17. 1. compared with *James* 5. 16, 17. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man ſubject to like paſſions as wee are, and hee prayed earneſtly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth by the ſpace of three years and ſix months.*

Thus alſo the holy Prophet *Eliſha* prevails with God by Faith in prayer for the ſmiting of the King of *Syria*'s Army with blindneſs, 2 *King.* 6. 18. *And when they came down to him, Eliſha prayed unto the Lord, and ſaid, Smite this*

people, I pray thee, with blindneſs; And hee ſmote them with blindneſs according to the Word of Eliſha.

Thus alſo the two faithful witneſſes under the New Teſtament which the Lord raiſeth up to propheſie and bear witneſs againſt Antichriſt 1260 daies, that is, all the time of the beaſts reign and tyranny (for ſo long hee is to continue, *Rev.* 13. 6.) have power to pull down vengeance upon their enemies, and to open and ſhut Heaven, and ſmite the earth with plagues, as oft as they will, *Rev.* 11. 5, 6. *And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies. And if any man will hurt them, hee muſt in this manner bee killed. Theſe have power to ſhut Heaven, that it rain not in the daies of their prophecy, and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to ſmite the earth with plagues,*

as

as often as they will.

See here what great power the Lord hath given to his witneſs-bearing Saints and ſervants under the New Teſtament! whom hee raiſeth up to bear witneſs for Chriſt againſt Antichriſt, to proteſt and prophecy againſt all the abominations of the man of ſin; though they have no worldly power, nor arm of fleſh to protect them, yet they are not left deſtitute, for they have power to ſhut Heaven, and to ſmite the Earth with plagues, and to call for vengeance, and the righteous judgements of God to be made manifeſt upon their enemies, for which cauſe fire is ſaid to proceed out of their mouth; not materially, but virtually, *i. e.* they do by their prayers and prophecies which proceed out of their mouth, procure vengeance from Heaven, and all the plagues and

righteous judgements of God to be poured forth of the vials of his wrath upon the Antichriſtian party, who are their malicious and implacable enemies: by which means they are preſerved and protected in their witneſs-bearing-work, all the time of their Prophecy, until the end and finiſhing thereof; at which time by the determinate counſel of God, they are to be ſlain, and lye dead for a ſeaſon, in order to a glorious reſurrection, *Rev.* 11. 7,8,9,10,11,12,13.

3. The Saints and ſervants of God have obtained by Faith in prayer, great and wonderful deliverances, when they have been in the greateſt danger, yea even in the very jaws of deſtruction.

1. Perſonal deliverances.

Great and marvellous perſonal deliverances have been obtained by Faith in prayer, or by the faithful prayers of the righteous.

Thus

Thus that precious and faithful ſervant of God, *Hezekiah*, when hee was ſick unto the death, and had received a peremptory ſentence of death by the mouth of the Prophet, *Iſa.* 38. 1. *Set thy houſe in order, for thou ſhalt dye, and not live*: by Faith in prayer obtained the reverſion of that ſentence, and was delivered in a moſt wonderful manner from the very jaws of death, *verſ.* 5. *Go and ſay to Hezekiah, Thus ſaith the Lord, the God of David thy Father, I have heard thy prayer, I have ſeen thy tears: behold I will add unto thy daies fifteen years.* Which deliverance was (all circumſtances conſidered) ſo marvellous and wonderful, that the fame thereof ſounded as far as *Babylon*; the King whereof ſent his Embaſſadors to congratulate the Kings recovery, and to enquire of the wonder,

wonder, 2 *Chron.* 32. 31.

Thus alſo the good Prophet *Jonah* (though an angry paſſionate man) when he prayed to the Lord in the fiſhes belly, and when hee was even ſwallowed up of death, without all viſible help or hope of deliverance, by Faith in prayer obtained a wonderful deliverance at the hands of God, who ſpake to the fiſh, and it vomited up *Jonah* upon the dry Land, *Jonah* 2. 10. of which prayer of his in the fiſhes belly, and the great ſalvation obtained thereby, take his own confeſſion, *Jonah* 2. 2,5,6,7. *And I cryed by reaſon of mine affliction unto the Lord, and hee heard mee; out of the belly of Hell cryed I, and thou heardeſt my voice: The waters compaſſed mee about even to the ſoul; the depth cloſed mee round about, the weeds were wrapt about my head. I went down to the bottoms*

the mountains; the earth with her bars was about mee for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God. When my soul fainted within mee, I remembred the Lord, and my prayer came in unto thee, into thy holy Temple.

Thus the holy man *Peter* alſo being ſhut up in priſon by *Herod*, and bound with two chains, kept all night between two ſouldiers, the keepers alſo ſtanding before the door; being as a ſheep faſt bound and appointed for the ſlaughter next morning; by the prayers of the Church at *Jeruſalem* was wonderfully delivered from death, and reſcued out of the hand of his enemies by an Angel, *Act.* 12. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

2. National and publick deliverances.

Great, National, and publick deliverances have alſo been obtained at the hands of God by the faithful prayers of his people.

Thus

Thus was *Jeruſalem* and the whole Church of God delivered from the cruel rage, great power and proud threatnings of the King of *Aſſyria*, by the prayer of *Hezekiah* (an Army of a hundred fourſcore and five thouſand being ſlain by the Angel of the Lord in one night) *Iſa.* 37. 21. *Then Iſaiah the Son of Amos ſent unto Hezekiah, ſaying, Thus ſaith the Lord God of Iſrael; whereas thou haſt prayed to mee againſt Sennacherib King of Aſſyria.* verſ. 33. *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord concerning the King of Aſſyria; Hee ſhall not come into this City, nor ſhoot an Arrow there, nor come before it with ſhields, nor caſt a bank againſt it; by the way that hee came, by the ſame ſhall hee return, and ſhall not come into this City, ſaith the Lord: for I will defend this City to ſave it, for mine own ſake, and for my ſervant Davids ſake.* And

verſ.

verſ. 36. Then the Angel of the Lord went forth and ſmote in the Camp of the Aſſyrians a hundred and fourſcore and five thouſand, and when they aroſe early in the morning, behold they were all dead carpſes.

Oh the admirable and wonderful ſtrength of Faith in prayer! that one praying faithful Saint of God ſhould prevail more by one prayer of Faith, than the greateſt Conquerors in the world could ever do by force and power! a hundred and fourſcore and five thouſand ſlain by the prayers of one man! one *Hezekiah* prayes, and the whole Church of God is delivered!

Thus alſo when proud *Haman* that wicked enemy of the people of God had conſpired the utter ruine and deſtruction of the Jews, in the daies of the captivity; and the deſign was laid ſo ſure

ſure (the Kings Royal aſſent be-
ing obtained, and the decree
gone forth into all the Kings
Provinces, and the day ſet for the
execution thereof) that it was im-
poſſible in the eye of reaſon, that
it ſhould be diſappointed; yet by
the prayers of good *Mordecai*,
and the remnant of a poor de-
ſpiſed people, a moſt glorious de-
liverance was obtained; the
Kings heart ſuddenly and won-
derfully changed; the former
decree and ſentence of death re-
verſed; *Mordecai* highly honour-
ed and advanced, the Jews every
where encouraged; wonderfully
preſerved, and feared by their
enemies; and wicked *Haman*,
their proud and implacable ene-
my, with all his family deſtroyed
and rooted out of the earth,
Eſther 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, chap-
ters.

Thus alſo when the children
of

of *Ammon*, *Moab*, and *Mount-Seir*, had conſpired the utter ruine of the people of God, and joyned together in a numerous and multitudinous Hoſt, and ſuddenly invaded *Judah* for that end, ſuppoſing themſelves to have been ſure enough of their deſign, there being no ſtrength nor proviſion with *Jehoſaphat* to withſtand them. A moſt wonderful and glorious victory and deliverance was obtained by the prayer of good *Jehoſaphat*, 2 *Chron.* 20. 3. *And Jehoſaphat feared, and ſet himſelf to ſeek the Lord*, v. 6. *And ſaid, O Lord God of our Fathers, art not thou God in Heaven? and rulest not thou over all the Kingdomes of the Heathen? And in thine hand is there not power and might, ſo that none is able to withſtand thee? Art not thou our God, who didſt drive out the inhabitants of this Land before*

thy

thy people Iſrael, and gaveſt it to the ſeed of Abraham thy friend for ever. And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a Sanctuary therein for thy Name, ſaying, If when evil cometh upon us, as the ſword, judgement, or peſtilence, or famine, wee ſtand before this houſe, and in thy preſence (for thy Name is in this houſe) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help. And now behold, the children of Ammon, and Moab, and Mount-Seir, whom thou wouldeſt not let Iſrael invade, when they came out of the Land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and deſtroyed them not. Behold (I ſay) how they reward us, to come to caſt us out of thy poſſeſſion, which thou haſt given us to inherit: O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might againſt this great company that cometh againſt us: neither know wee what to do, but our eyes

are

are upon thee. And all Judah ſtood before the Lord with their little ones, their wives and their children.

Oh here is a prayer of Faith indeed! there is much of the life of Faith, and ſtrength of argument in this prayer of good *Jehoſaphat.*

1. By Faith he ſees and pleads the near relation betwixt God and his people *Iſrael,* the ſeed of *Abraham* his friend.

2. By Faith hee preſſes God upon his Covenant and Promiſe made to *Abraham, Iſaac* and *Jacob,* by which hee gave the Land of *Canaan* (which is therefore called the Land of Promiſe) to *Abraham* and his ſeed for ever.

3. By Faith hee acknowledgeth and improveth the ſoveraignty and ruling power which God keepeth in his own hand over all the Kingdomes of the world,

yea over the very Heathen, and thoſe that are the enemies of his Church and People; and therefore is able at all times to fruſtrate their deepeſt counſels, diſappoint their greateſt deſigns, bridle their greateſt rage and power, ſo as to deliver his people, that put their truſt in him.

4. By Faith hee pleads the ſpecial Covenant and Promiſe of God made to *Solomon* on the behalf of his people at the dedication of the Temple, and applies it to the preſent caſe in hand.

5. By Faith hee improves the various paſſages of providence, clearing up the innocency and integrity of his people *Iſrael*, and the righteouſneſs of their cauſe, and on the contrary, declareth the guiltineſs, ingratitude, and wickedneſs of theſe ungodly nations that were now combined together to ſeek the ruine of *Iſrael*.

And

And upon the whole leaves the caſe with God, as a moſt righteous Judge, holy, faithful, and able to plead the caſe of his poor people in this great diſtreſs.

And prevails ſo far with God by this prayer of Faith, that hee hath a gracious anſwer, and a moſt glorious return in the wonderful Salvation of the Church and People of God for whom hee prayed, and in the utter deſtruction and overthrow of their potent enemies, againſt whom hee prayed: for *verſ.* 14. *Then, upon Jahaziel, &c. came the Spirit of the Lord in the midſt of the Congregation. And hee ſaid, Thus ſaith the Lord unto you, be not afraid nor diſmayed by reaſon of this great multitude, for the battel is not yours, but Gods.* And *ver.* 17. *Yee ſhall not need to fight in this battel: ſet your ſelves, ſtand yee ſtill and ſee the ſalvation of the Lord*

with you. And *verſ.* 22. *When they began to ſing and to praiſe: The Lord ſet ambuſhments againſt the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount-Seir, which were come againſt Judah, and they were ſmitten, for the children of Ammon and Moab ſtood up againſt the Inhabitants of Mount-Seir, utterly to ſlay and deſtroy them: And when they had made an end of the Inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to deſtroy another. And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderneſs, they looked unto the multitude, and behold they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none eſcaped.* And *verſ.* 25. *When Jehoſaphat and his people came to take the ſpoil of them, they found among them in abundance, both riches, with the dead bodies, and precious Jewels (which they ſtript off for themſelves) more than they could carry away, and they were three dates in gather-*

ing

ing of the ſpoil, it was ſo much.

Oh what a wonderful deliverance and ſalvation was here obtained by one prayer of Faith! Good *Jehoſaphat* prayes in Faith, and prevails by prayer with God; The enemies are divided one againſt another, and utterly deſtroyed one by another; *Iſrael* ſaved with a wonderful ſalvation, and greatly enriched with the ſpoil of their enemies!

4. The Saints and Servants of God by Faith in prayer, have prevailed with God for the ſtopping the courſe, and changing the very law of nature in his government of the Creatures, ſo that they have at the command of God been ſerviceable to his Church and People, not onely beyond, but even againſt the courſe and law of nature,

So holy *Joſhua* by Faith in prayer, commands the Sun and 1. Inſtance

Moon to ſtand ſtill, and ſtay their courſe, until hee had avenged the Lords people upon their enemies, *Joſh.* 10. 12. *Then ſpake Joſhua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Iſrael. And hee ſaid in the ſight of Iſrael, Sun, ſtand thou ſtill upon Gibeon, and thou Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.* And *verſ.* 13. *The Sun ſtood ſtill, and the Moon ſtayed until the people had avenged themſelves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jaſher? So the Sun ſtood ſtill in the midſt of Heaven, and haſted not to go down about a whole day!* And *verſ.* 14. *There was no day like that before it, or after it, that the Lord hearkened to the voice of a man, for the Lord fought for Iſrael.*

Oh the wonderful force, and prevailing efficacy of Faith in prayer! that even the courſe and

law of nature (which no creature can reſiſt or withſtand) ſhould thereby be ſtayed! and the Sun and the Moon (which by the ordinance of God are to bee in continual motion, and move with ſuch wonderful ſpeed, as to compaſs the world in the vaſt circumference of the Heavens in a few hours) ſhould at the word of a poor frail man, ſtand ſtill, and ſtay their courſe for the ſpace of a whole day! Job 38. 31, 32, 33. 34, 35 Ezek. 1. 17 Pſal. 19. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Thus alſo holy *Moſes* prevails with the Lord by prayer, for the dividing the waters of the Sea, even the Red Sea, ſo that (contrary to the law and courſe of nature) they ſtood upon an heap, and were a wall to *Iſrael* on the right hand, and on the left, *Exod.* 14. 15, 16. *And the Lord ſaid unto Moſes, Wherefore cryeſt thou unto mee? Speak unto the children of Iſrael that they go* 2. Inſtance

forward. But lift up thou thy Rod, and ſtretch out thine hand over the Sea, and divide it, and the children of Iſrael ſhall go on dry ground thorow the midſt of the Sea. And *verſ.* 22. *The children of Iſrael went into the midſt of the Sea upon the dry ground, and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.*

Oh the admirable and marvellous ſtrength and power of Faith in prayer! that by it the waters of the Sea, the depths of the Sea ſhould be divided, and made to ſtand upon heaps, as a wall to Gods *Iſrael!* and yet ſo it is; *Moſes* cryeth to the Lord at the Sea, even the Red Sea, and the waters are divided, and become a wall to *Iſrael* in their paſſage towards *Canaan*, on the right hand, and on the left!

All which (with many other bleſſed experiences of the Saints

which

which might be inſtanced in) do amount to a ſufficient teſtimony and witneſs to the truth in hand; and do abundantly evince the truth of this bleſſed promiſe of the Lord Jeſus to his poor ſervants here on earth: *And all things whatſoever yee ſhall ask in prayer, beleeving, yee ſhall receive.*

The grounds and reaſons of the point upon which this great truth is eſtabliſhed, and wherein the evidence and demonſtrations thereof do yet more fully appear, are briefly theſe three.

The prayers of Faith, or beleeving prayers of the Saints and ſervants of God here on earth, are heaven-born. They are influenced from Heaven by the conduct and guidance of the holy Spirit, whoſe office it is to influence and manage the Saints in this great concern and work of prayer: So that the things which 1. Reaſon.

which they ask of God in prayer (when they ask in Faith) are not so much the fruit of the inward breathings, and unfeigned desires of their own hearts and spirits, as of the holy and blessed Spirit of grace breathing in them, and teaching them to pray as they ought, which of themselves they neither know, nor can do, *Rom.* 8. 26. *Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for wee know not what we should pray for as we ought: But the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered: And hee that searcheth the heart, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the Saints, according to the will of God.*

So that the holy Spirit of God doth not onely help and assist the Saints in the right manner of prayer, exciting their graces, quickening and drawing out their affections,

affections, helping them to right ends and aims in prayer (all which are alſo neceſſarily required) but doth alſo ſuggeſt and teach them the very matter of their prayers; how and what to pray for, and aſk of God both for themſelves and others: *The Spirit alſo helpeth our infirmities, for wee know not what to pray for as wee ought: But the Spirit it ſelf, &c.* So that the Saints are taught from Heaven what to pray for as they ought; the Spirit of God from Heaven doth teach and aſſiſt them to pray here on earth according to the will of God.

And how reproachfully and blaſphemouſly ſoever wicked and ungodly men do ſpeak of the (ſo called) extemporary prayers of the Saints: yet they are no leſs than heaven-born; the things which they are taught by the Spirit of God from Heaven to

to ask of God in prayer. And let wicked men know, that in blaſpheming and reproaching the prayers of the Saints, they do blaſpheme the Spirit it ſelf: [*But the Spirit it ſelf maketh interceſsion, &c.*] Wicked and ungodly men, who are ignorant of the Spirit of prayer, do exceedingly magnifie and cry up their ſtinted forms, and book-prayers, becauſe (as they imagine) compoſed and indited by holy and learned men, and that with the deepeſt judgement, and moſt ſerious conſideration had of the things meet to be asked of God in prayer: And do condemn the prayers of Gods Saints, becauſe (as they judge in the darkneſs of their carnal mind, which is alwaies enmity a-
Rom. 8.7 gainſt God) extemporary, raſh, and inconſiderate, without any deep conſideration and matter prepared before-hand: but let

ſuch

ſuch know, that the beſt of their ſtinted Forms and Book-prayers, are but indited by men on earth; and on the other hand, the prayers of Gods Saints and ſervants offered up in Faith (though extemporary) are indited by the Spirit of God in Heaven, and given in immediately by the miniſtration of the holy Spirit, who knoweth better what is meet to be asked of God in prayer (extemporary) than the greateſt Biſhops, Doctors, and learned men upon earth can do, by their deepeſt conſultation.

And let ſuch reſolve this queſtion; whether are moſt agreeable to the will and mind of God, thoſe prayers, which are indited by the Spirit of God in Heaven, and given in from above, as all the prayers of the Saints are which they put up in Faith: or thoſe which are compoſed

poſed and impoſed by the carnal wiſdome, and coercive power of men on earth, contrary to the Word of God?

And let mee adde this one word more; that the prayer of the pooreſt Saint, though encompaſſed with utmoſt humane frailties and infirmities, yet being breathed by the holy Spirit into his heart, and breathed out again in Faith by the help of the ſame Spirit, hath more of heavenly wiſdome, and true ſpiritual excellency in it, than the moſt magnified and admired Form that ever was compoſed by the greateſt Doctors, and learned men in the world: For *Joh.* 3.6. *That which is born of the fleſh, is fleſh: and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit.* And again, *verſ.* 31. *He that is of the earth, is earthly, and ſpeaketh of the earth; hee that cometh from Heaven is above all.*

all. As Jeſus Chriſt came from Heaven, and therefore was above all the Prophets and Apoſtles: ſo alſo the Spirit of God cometh from Heaven, and is above all the Doctors, Biſhops, and learned men in the world, in teaching us how and what to pray for as wee ought.

And hence it is, that true ſpiritual and heavenly prayer is diſtinguiſhed from all hypocritical ſhews, and pretences of prayer by this character, *Epheſ.* 6. 18. *Praying alwaies, with all prayer and ſupplication in the Spirit.* True prayer and ſupplication is alwaies in the Spirit. And again, *Jude* 20. *Praying in the Holy Ghoſt.*

The ſumme and cloſe of the matter, is, prayers of Faith do come from God, and therefore muſt needs prevail with God; prayers of Faith are heaven-born, and therefore muſt needs finde acceptance there. The

3. Reason. The prayers of Faith, or the beleeving prayers of the Saints and People of God, do alwaies fall in with the will of God: The ſtinted Forms, and compoſed Prayers of formal Hypocritical pretenders to Religion, do alwaies in one thing or other run counter to the will of God. In the very matter of their petitions, it being impoſſible that ſuch as keep themſelves to a ſtinted Form of Prayer, and oblige themſelves to uſe ſuch a form of words in prayer, and no others, ſhould avoid this Rock (upon which they muſt inevitably fall and ſplit themſelves) that the things which they ſo ask, muſt of neceſſity run croſs to the will of God: let them take what Form they will, and ſtint themſelves to the conſtant uſe of it (as the Hypocrites do) and experience will quickly teach them, that

that in ſo doing they muſt contradict the revealed will of God in their petitions; and therefore ſuch prayers muſt needs be very fruitleſs.

But the prayers of the ſincere children of God, which are indeed prayers of Faith, and the breathings of Gods own Spirit in them, do alwaies concur, and fall in with the will of God: And as hee that ſearcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the ſpirit, in the hearts of his children: ſo the Spirit ſearcheth all things, yea the deep things of God, *Rom.* 8. 27. *Becauſe hee* (*i. e.* the holy Spirit of God) *maketh interceſſion for the Saints, according to the will of God.* 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11

Faith looks at the will of God as her rule in asking; and in things about which the will of God is revealed, Faith will be poſitive, and ask abſolutely with-

out an if: but in things about which the will of God is yet ſecret and unknown, Faith will ask with ſubmiſſion to the will of God. *Not my will, but thy will be done*, is the language of Faith in ſuch caſes: And it is as impoſſible for Faith to erre in this particular, and to miſs of the will of God in asking, as it is for the Sun in the Firmament, to miſtake his way in his heavenly perambulation: or for the waters of the Rivers to miſtake their way into the Sea, that they ſhould not come into, and coincidate with the Ocean.

Whatſoever therefore the Saints do ask in Faith, they do ask according to the will of God, whether it be ſecret or revealed; For the rule which Faith looks at, is an unerring rule, *viz.* the whole light of Scripture-revelation. And the conduct and guide by

by which Faith is directed in asking, is an unerring guide, even the holy Spirit of God, *Rom.* 8. 26. which perfectly knoweth and ſearcheth what is the mind and will of God in all caſes, whether ſecret or manifeſt.

And it is worthy obſervation, how the poor Saints of God are oft times, by a ſecret inſtinct and conduct of the Spirit guided in prayer, to ask thoſe very things of God, which hee is about to do and bring to paſs, beyond what is revealed or made known.

As when *Lot* asked of God in Prayer, the preſervation of the City *Zoar*, which was threatned, and in viſible danger of periſhing in the common deſtruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and yet was preſerved by the prayer of righteous *Lot*, who was queſtionleſs guided in his asking that City above any other, by the ſecret in- Gen. 16. 19,20,21

ſtinct of the Spirit, who knew what was the ſecret will and purpoſe of God in that matter, and therefore taught *Lot* to make interceſſion for it according to the will of God.

Thus alſo that holy woman *Hannah*, when ſhee prayed for a Son, and in the pouring out of her ſpirit to the Lord in prayer, did before-hand dedicate and devote him to the Lord all his daies, was queſtionleſs guided by a ſecret and ſpecial inſtinct of the ſpirit, to ask of God that very thing that was in the heart and purpoſe of God concerning her and her Son, though as yet ſecret and unknown, 1 *Sam.* 1. 10, 11.

Thus alſo the laſt Martyrs that ſuffered in the *Marian* daies, were taught from Heaven by the ſecret conduct of the ſpirit, to ask of God in prayer that they might

might be the laſt that ſhould ſuffer in that manner, and that the Lord would put an end to the afflictions of his people. And were in that petition graciouſly heard and anſwered: for preſently the life of that wicked Queen was cut off by the hand of God: And though many others were condemned, and warrants iſſued out for the burning of them, yet the tydings of the Queens death ſtayed the execution, and thoſe precious ſouls were, according to their petition, the laſt that ſuffered in that bloody perſecution. Fox Martire. vol. 3. p. 893.

Whatever therefore the Saints do ask of God in prayer, by the help of his holy Spirit, and by Faith in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, they do ask according to his will, and therefore muſt needs prevail in Heaven, and have ſuch petitions granted and fulfilled on

earth, 1 *Joh.* 5. 14, 15. *And this is the confidence that wee have in him, that if wee ask any thing according to his will, hee heareth us. And if wee know that hee heareth us. Whatsoever wee ask, wee know that wee have the petitions that wee desired of him.*

3. Reason. The prayers of the Saints offered up in Faith, do fall under the blessing of the mediation and intercession of Jesus Christ, that great High Priest over the House of God, who is entred into the Heavens, even Jesus the Son of God, whose office it is to offer up the prayers of all the Saints with the spiritual incense of his merits, whereby they do become acceptable to God.

Heb. 4 14. 16

It pertained to the office, and was the custome of the Priests under the Law to enter within the vail, and offer up the sweet Incense with the prayers of the Congregation,

Exod. 30. 6, 7
Levit. 16. 12

Congregation, who uſually were without the door of the Tabernacle praying at the time of Incenſe: And the time of the Prieſts offering up Incenſe was obſerved by the Congregation as a ſpecial time and ſeaſon for prayer: And all this was to typifie and point out ſomething of the Prieſtly and Mediatorial Office of Jeſus Chriſt, who is now entred within the vail, into the holy of holies, *i. e.* the heavenly places themſelves, there to appear in the preſence of God for us, as *a Prieſt for ever after the order of Melchiſedeck:* to offer up all the ſpiritual ſacrifices and ſervices of the Saints unto his Father, with the ſprinkling of his blood, and ſweet perfume and incenſe of his precious merits upon them, whereby their perſons, though compaſſed with many ſins and infirmities, and their ſervices, though weak

Luke 1. 8, 9, 10

Heb 6. 19, 20. and 9. 24

and imperfect in themselves, are made infinitely acceptable and well pleasing unto the Father through him.

1. Their persons.

1. Their persons are made acceptable unto the Father through him, *Ephes.* 1. 6. *To the praise of his glorious grace, wherein hee hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

Oh ye precious Saints of God, know that the acceptation of your persons with the Father, stands not in your own Saintship, and personal righteousnes, but in the imputed righteousnes, precious blood, and merits of Jesus Christ, which is made yours by Faith: So that by the blood of Jesus ye are now made Kings and Priests unto his Father, and may come to the throne of grace with acceptation, *Rev.* 1. 5. 6. *Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood: And hath*

hath made us Kings and Prieſts unto God and his Father; therefore yee may come boldly to the throne of grace, through the glorious interceſſion of Jeſus your great High Prieſt, *Heb.* 4. 14. *Seeing then that wee have a great High Prieſt, that is paſſed into the Heavens, Jeſus the Son of God.* Verſ. 16. *Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace.* And again, *Epheſ.* 3. 12. *In whom wee have boldneſs and acceſs by the Faith of him.*

2. The ſervices, and ſpiritual ſacrifices of the Saints which they offer up to God in Faith, are acceptable to the Father through Jeſus Chriſt, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *Yee alſo as lively ſtones are built up a ſpiritual-houſe, an holy Prieſthood, to offer up ſpiritual ſacrifice, acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt.* 2. Their ſervices.

Where obſerve, that the mediation and interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt,

Christ, is the procuring cause of all the Saints acceptation with God, both as to their persons, and as to their services, which here are called spiritual sacrifice. And yee Saints of God, know, that your sacrifices are not therefore acceptable to God, because spiritual, but because offered to God thorow Jesus Christ, because sprinkled with the blood of Christ.

Now it is the nature and property of Faith to lead us out of
Rom. 5. 1 our selves for acceptation, as well as for assistance, unto the blood,
Isa. 45. 24 and righteousness, and merits of Jesus Christ, and Faith seeks its
Gal. 2. 19, 20 acceptation with the Father onely, and wholly through the mediation of Jesus the Son of God.

And therefore all the prayers of the Saints, which are put up in Faith, do come under the mediation, and glorious intercession of Jesus,

Jeſus, and are offered up to the Father by the hand of Chriſt, who is therefore called the Angel of the Covenant, and ſaid to ſtand before the Altar, *i. e.* the Incenſe Altar, becauſe hee offereth up continually the prayers of the Saints with his own hand, perfumed with the Incenſe of his own merits unto the Father, *Rev.* 8. 3, 4. *And another Angel came and ſtood at the Altar, having a golden Cenſer. And there was given unto him much Incenſe, that he ſhould offer it with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar which was before the Throne: And the ſmoke of the Incenſe which came with the prayers of the Saints, aſcended up before God, out of the Angels hand.*

Oh needs muſt the prayers of Faith, the beleeving prayers of all the Saints aſcend up before God, and prevail in Heaven, which

which are offered up by the hand of this bleſſed Angel, even Jeſus, who is before the throne, And is there continually! ſo that it is alwaies the time of Incenſe with the Congregation of Gods praying people; for this bleſſed Angel is day and night before the Throne, offering up their prayers with the pure Incenſe of his merits: Jeſus the Mediator and High Prieſt of our profeſſion, is alway within the vail, carrying on this part of his Prieſtly office in Heaven, *Heb.* 7. 25. *Seeing hee ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.*

1. uſe. If the Efficacy of Faith in prayer be ſuch, that the Saints may thereby prevail in Heaven: And that all things, whatſoever they ſhall ask in prayer, beleeving, they ſhall receive; then woe be to all ſuch as have the prayers of the Saints juſtly engaged a-

gainſt

gainſt them. It is eaſier to ſtand before the greateſt Armies, before the combined powers and policies of the greateſt Monarchs and Princes in the world, than to ſtand before the prayers of two or three poor Saints, who pray in Faith, and cry day and night to God for help againſt their wicked perſecutors.

'Tis ſtoried of the Champions, and Worthies of the Old Teſtament, amongſt other worthy deeds, and great things which they did by Faith: That by it they put to flight the Armies of the Aliens, and ſubdued Kingdomes, *Heb.* 11. 33. *Who through Faith ſubdued Kingdomes, ſtopped the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of fire, eſcaped the edge of the ſword, out of weakneſs, were made ſtrong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the Armies of the Aliens.* By Faith, *i.e.* by prayers

prayers of Faith; for they cryed unto the Lord in their ſtraits, and under the great oppreſſions and tyranny of their enemies, they prayed to the Lord for help againſt them: And by Faith in prayer they obtained help from God againſt their perſecutors.

Their enemies were wonderfully brought under, mighty Kingdomes ſubdued, and whole Armies ſtrangely conquered, and ſhamefully put to flight.

Exod. 14. 27, 28 Sometimes without means, as *Pharaoh* and all his Hoſt at the Red Sea.

Sometimes by weak and contemptible means; as *Siſera* fell Judges 4. 21 by the hand of a woman. And Act. 12. 23 King *Herod* that bloody perſecutor, dyed by Worms or Lice. And the whole Army of the *Midianites* with the *Amalekites*, and all the children of the Eaſt, who lay upon the ground like Graſhoppers

pers (ſo great was their multitude) were put to flight by the dream of a Barley Cake tumbling into the Hoſt of *Midian*. Judg. 5. 12,13,14

Sometimes by contrary means, againſt the very Law of nature, friendſhip, and natural affection. So proud and blaſphemous *Sennacherib* fell by his own Sons, whilſt hee was worſhipping in the houſe of *Niſeroth* his God, who were wonderfully over-ruled by the power and providence of God, even againſt the Law of nature and religion, to execute the wrath of God; and avenge the cauſe of his praying-people upon this proud and wicked perſecutor. So alſo the children of *Moab*, *Ammon*, and *Mount-Seir*, who were confederate againſt *Judah*, were by the juſt judgement of God at the prayer of good *Jehoſaphat*, given up to ſuch a ſpirit of diviſion and hatred amongſt Iſa. 37.38

2 Chron. 20.23,24 mongſt themſelves, that they fully ſet themſelves to deſtroy one another, and ceaſed not till there was not one of them left.

Sometimes by preternatural and extraordinary means, where ordinary means have failed. Thus Joſh. 10. 10,11 the five Kings and their Armies that fought againſt *Joſhuah*, were ſubdued and deſtroyed chiefly by hailſtones from Heaven. And thus the King of *Aſſyria*'s Army, Iſa. 27.36 conſiſting of an hundred and fourſcore and five thouſand, were ſlain in one night by the hand of an Angel. Thus the mouths of thoſe greedy and roaring Lions were ſtopped by an Angel, that Dan. 1.6. 22 they could not ſo much as touch *Daniel*. And the burning deſtroying power of the fiery Furnace ſo quenched by the glorious preſence of the Son of God, that it Dan. 3. 25,26,27 had no power ſo much as to ſinge the garments, or hair of the heads

heads of thoſe three Worthies, *Shadrach*, *Meſhach*, and *Abednego*.

So that the greateſt Monarchs, Princes, Generals, Armies, and Kingdomes of the world, have not been able to ſtand before the prayers of the Saints of God, when they have prayed in Faith, and cryed to the Lord for help againſt them!

Woe therefore be unto all thoſe againſt whom the Elect of God do cry for vengeance day and night! 'Tis not in the power of the greateſt worldly force and pollicy to ſecure them from the revenging hand of God: No, but ſuch muſt certainly fall before the prayers of Gods Elect, *Luke* 18. 7, 8. *And ſhall not God avenge his own Elect, which cry day and night unto him; though hee bear long with them (i. e.* with the perſecutors) *I tell you that hee will avenge them ſpeedily.*

Oh that therefore the Kings and Princes, and Rulers of the Earth would bee wiſe and take heed how by perſecuting and oppreſſing the People of God, they conſtrain them to cry to Heaven againſt them: 'Tis bleſſed counſel which the Spirit of God gives by the mouth of his ſervant *David*, Pſal. 2.10. *Be wiſe now therefore O yee Kings, be inſtructed yee Judges of the Earth: Serve the Lord with feat, and rejoyce with trembling. Kiſs the Son, leſt hee be angry, and yee periſh in the way: When his wrath is kindled but a little, bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in him.*

2. Uſe. What a great mercy and bleſſing then are the Saints and People of God to the Nations, and Kingdoms, and Countries where they live? who as ſo many Princes, or rather Kings and Prieſts, have power with God; and can by

by Faith in prayer prevail with him for any thing?

What a mercy was one praying *Moſes* to the Nation of *Iſrael*, when they had provoked the Lord to jealouſie by the golden Calf? Pſal. 106. 23

What a great mercy was one praying *Lot* to the City *Zoar*? which ſhould have been deſtroyed with *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, had not *Lot* prayed for it? Gen. 19. 21

What a great bleſſing was holy *Jacob* (who was a great wreſtler with God in prayer, and as a Prince, had power with God, and prevailed, and upon that account had his name changed from *Jacob* to *Iſrael*) what a mercy I ſay was hee to the whole Family of his Unckle *Laban*, whilſt he ſojourned there? Gen. 32. 24. 28 Gen. 30. 27

That ſpeech of the Lord to King *Abimelech*, and his People, concerning *Abraham* a poor traveller.

veller and ſtranger, who came but to ſojourn in his Country for a time, is very remarkable, *Gen.* 20. 7. *Now therefore reſtore the man his Wife, for hee is a Prophet, and hee ſhall pray for thee, and thou ſhalt live.* Wrath was gone out from the Lord againſt King *Abimelech* and his People. And the prayers of *Abraham*, a poor ſtranger, prevail in Heaven for the life of *Abimelech*, who otherwaies was but a dead man, and for thoſe in his houſe, whoſe wombs were faſt cloſed up, becauſe of *Sarah Abraham*'s Wife, whom *Abimelech* had ſinfully taken to him. Their own ſin (not *Abraham*'s ſojourning) had procured wrath againſt them. And *Abraham* by prayer procureth ſparing and healing mercy for them! A ſinning Court, who daily provoke the Lord againſt themſelves and ſubjects, had need

Gen. 20. 3. 17, 18

need of ſome praying ſouls daily to intercede for them!

How great therefore is the errour of the wicked, who look upon the People of God as the onely troublers of their *Iſrael?* and attribute the cauſe of all their calamities and troubles to the Lords faithful ſervants; which they procure unto themſelves by their own wickedneſs? Juſtly therefore may the Lords People anſwer ſuch *Ahabs*, in the words of that old non-conformiſt and good Prophet *Elijah*, 1 *King.* 18. 18. *Wee have not troubled Iſrael, but thou, and thy Fathers houſe, in that yee have forſaken the Commandements of the Lord, and thou haſt followed Baalim!* 'Tis not the zealous and conſcientious non conformiſt, that troubles the Court and Country, but the Idolatrous and ſuperſtitious party, who caſt off the Commande-

1 King. 18. 17

ments of the Lord, and ſet up their own inventions, and as a greater aggravation of their wickedneſs, would compel others to ſin with them.

Pſal. 106. 29
Rev. 13. 12,15,16

Oh that therefore the eyes of the Nations, of the Kings and Judges of the earth were opened to diſcern aright, and to ſee who are the troublers of *Iſrael*, and who are the chariots and horſemen thereof: Well! that bleſſed day is a coming, wherein the Kings of the earth even ſhall hate that ſcarlet whore, & tear her fleſh, & burn her with fire, even ſo *Amen*. The good Lord haſten it in his due time, and let all the Saints ſay, *Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly*. Well then! whatever wicked men ſay, whatever proud men ſay out of the blindneſs, and hardneſs, and unbeleef of their hearts; yet the zealous and conſcientious non-conformiſts are not the troublers

Rev. 17. 16,17

troublers of *Iſrael*, but the Chariots and Horſe-men thereof: Are not the Kings enemies but his and their Countries beſt friends? and wicked men will be found at laſt to be the worſt ſubjects and enemies both to their King and Country. 2 King. 2. 12 Rev. 16. 13, 14 Rev. 19. 19, 20, 21

Let the Nations, Kings and Princes of the earth therefore know, that 'tis their beſt intereſt to cheriſh, protect and incourage a praying and a holy people, though they cannot in all things conform to their laws and cuſtoms in the matters of Gods moſt holy worſhip, about which the holy God is ſo jealous, and his people ſo truly and tenderly conſcientious. And the prayers of ſuch a people ſhall prevail more in Heaven for their King and Country, in order to their defence and ſafety, than all the Chariots and Horſe-men, Souldiers & Armies, Exod. 20. 5 Dan. 3. 17, 18. & 6. 10

Power and Policy that the whole world can afford them.

3. Uſe. Then O ye Saints and Servants of the moſt high God, who have received the ſpirit of Adoption, and have an intereſt in Jeſus the great High Prieſt, who is entred into the Heavens for us, even Jeſus the Son of God, come boldly and daily to the throne of grace, improve your intereſt in Heaven, and try what faith and prayer will do there for the help of your native Country, your poor afflicted brethren abroad in the world, for the conſolation and deliverance of *Zion*, that City of God, and for the confuſion and deſtruction of mighty *Babel*, that Mother of Harlots, and abominations of the earth, who hath corrupted the whole earth with her fornications, involved the whole Creation in ſuch a woful bondage and thraldome, and made her ſelf drunk with

with the blood of Saints and Martyrs of Jeſus. Come boldly I ſay to the throne of Grace, and cry mightily to Heaven even day and night, and give the Lord no reſt till he doth ariſe, and make his *Jeruſalem* a praiſe in the earth, and fulfil all thoſe glorious things which are ſpoken of that City of God, and execute all the judgements written againſt *Babylon* to *binde her Kings in chains, and her Nobles in links of Iron.* This honour have all his Saints.

Heb. 4. 16
Luke 18. 7
Iſa. 62. 6, 7
Pſal. 87. 3
Pſal. 149. 7, 8, 9

O ye Saints, this is an honour that the God of Heaven and earth hath put upon you (by virtue of the anointing and unction of the holy one that is upon you) for that end to be the witneſſes of Jeſus Chriſt, and to open and ſhut Heaven by your prayers, and to ſmite the earth with plagues as often as ye will, to pray down the mighty Kingdome of *Babel*, which

Rev. 11. 3, 4, 5, 6
Rev. 11. 15

which is Antichriſt, and to pray up the glorious and everlaſting
2 Pet. 3. 12, 13 Kingdome of Jeſus Chriſt; to pray out theſe old Heavens, and old earth, wherein dwelleth wickedneſs, and to pray in the new Heavens, and new Earth, wherein ſhall dwel righteouſneſs & peace.

This is an honour, I ſay, which the God of Heaven and Earth hath put upon you, that ye ſhould
Zech. 4. 14 ſtand before the God of the whole earth, and be inſtrumental and influential in and about theſe great things.

And this honour can no man take from you; this is a priviledge and honour given you from Heaven, and 'tis not in the power of all the devils in hell by tempting, nor all the powers of earth by perſecuting, to take it from you; they may caſt you into priſons, lay you in the darkeſt dungeons, drive you into exile and baniſhment,

ment, but ſtill where-ever you are, what-ever your outward condition be; Heaven is open over your heads, and the ſpirit of grace is nigh your hearts, ye may have acceſs to the throne of grace, they cannot keep out the Spirit from you, nor ſhut out your prayers from aſcending before God; if they will not ſuffer you to utter words, ye may pour out your ſpirits, and ſigh and groan inwardly, and hee who ſearcheth the heart, knoweth what is the mind of the ſpirit. I ſay, ye may come freely and boldly to the throne of grace, the way is open, and none can ſhut it; 'tis a new and a living way, not of works, but of grace; not by the blood of Bulls and of Goats, but by the blood of Jeſus; neither your ſins, nor your enemies therefore can ſhut it; if it were an old Covenant way of acceſs by works, and mans righteouſneſs, your

1 Sam. 1. 13, 15 Rom. 8. 26, 27.

y ur ſins might ſhut it, and you not be able to enter into the holieſt; or if it were a way of acceſs by carnal and external ſacrifices, your enemies might ſhut it, and
Dan.8.11. make the daily ſacrifice to ceaſe, either by denying you liberty, or wherewithall to ſacrifice.

But now ſeeing it is a new Covenant way of acceſs, not by works, and mans righteouſneſs, but by free grace, and Gods righteouſneſs imputed by Faith to them that beleeve not by external ſacrifice, but by the blood and ſpirit of Jeſus the Son of God; lift up your heads, and know that 'tis not in the power of your ſins, or enemies, to hinder your daily acceſs to the throne of grace; if you have Faith but as a grain of Muſtard-ſeed, and come in the exerciſe of that Faith by the blood of Jeſus, yee may ask and have, prevail with God by prayer

prayer for all things whatſoever; there is nothing too great, or too good for God to beſtow upon you; he hath ſet you no bounds, but bids you ask what you will: *And all things, whatſoever ye ſhall ask in prayer, beleeving, ye ſhall receive.* Let mee therefore cloſe up this exhortation with the words of the holy Apoſtle, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20, 21, 22. *Having therefore boldneſs to enter into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus, by a new and living way, which he hath conſecrated for us, through the vail, that is to ſay, his fleſh; and having an high Prieſt over the houſe of God: Let us draw near with a true heart, and in full aſſurance of Faith: having our hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience.*

Laſtly, And to ſhut up all, O ye uſe laſt. *Iſrael* of God, who as Princes have power with him thus to prevail in Heaven, that all things whatſoever

ever ye ask in prayer, beleeving, ye are ſure to receive; give all the glory unto Jeſus Chriſt, and caſt your crowns down at his feet, and give glory to the Lamb, through whom alone it is that ye thus overcome and prevail by Faith againſt all the powers of Hell and Earth.

Oh learn that new ſong, *Rev.* 5. 9. *Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the ſeals thereof* (not we are worthy, but thou art worthy) to have honour, and glory, and bleſſing, and power: As *verſ.* 12, 13. for *verſ.* 10. *Thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, tongue, and people, and nation, and haſt made us unto our God Kings and Prieſts.*

Oh know, and freely confeſs before Angels and men, that it is not by your own holineſs, or righteouſneſs, that ye do any of theſe great things; but by Faith in the name,

name, the bleſſed and holy name of Jeſus; let the ſame mind be in you, that was in the holy Apoſtles, *Peter* and *John*, who when they had done a great work upon the impotent man (who was lame from his Mothers womb, which drew the eye of the people with great admiration towards them) did humble and abaſe themſelves, that Chriſt alone might be magnified, & have all the glory of what they had done, directing the eye, and expectation of the people from them unto Jeſus the Son of God, *Act.* 3. 12. *Ye men of Iſrael, why marvel yee at this? Or why look yee ſo earneſtly on us? as though by our own power or holineſs we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, Iſaac, and of Jacob, the God of our Fathers hath glorified his Son Jeſus, whom ye delivered up, &c.* And *verſ.* 16. *His name, through Faith in his name hath*

hath made this man ſtrong, whom ye ſee and know. Yea the Faith which is by him, hath given him this perfect ſoundneſs in the preſence of you all.

Oh here is a choice and excellent ſpirit indeed! here is the life and glory of Faith indeed! to do great things in the name and ſtrength of Chriſt; & then to give all the glory back again to him!

Oh ye Saints and Servants of God, know, that 'tis not by your own power and holineſs, by your own Saintſhip and worthineſs, but by the power and holineſs, by the blood and righteouſneſs, by the mediation and interceſſion of Jeſus, that ye do any of theſe great things by Faith in prayer.

Therefore I ſay again and again, give all the glory to Jeſus Chriſt; let nothing be given to faith, nothing be given to prayer; nothing be given or aſcribed to your own Saintſhip or holineſs, but let all the

the glory be given to God and to the Lamb who is in the midſt of the throne, but the holy Angels, the four beaſts,& four and twenty Elders, with all the heavenly hoſt, whoſe number is ten thouſand times ten thouſand, are all about the throne, not ſharing the glory & honor with Jeſus Chriſt, though they have been miniſterially inſtrumental in the hand of Chriſt to accompliſh theſe great works;but giving all the glory to him, and to him alone, *Rev.*5.11. 12, 13, 14. *And I beheld, and I heard the voyce of many Angels round about the throne,and the beaſts and the Elders, and the number of them was ten thouſand times ten-thouſand,and thouſand of thouſands. Saying with a loud voyce, worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive power and riches and wiſdome, and ſtrength, and honor, and glory, and bleſſing. And every creature which*

is in Heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing, honor, glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four Beasts, and the four and twenty Elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever. Even so Amen.

And let all the Angels in heaven, and all the Saints in Heaven and earth, and all creatures, persons, and things be nothing, be lesse then nothing, be overshadowed and dis-appear, that Jesus Christ the Lamb of God may be all in all, and appear in his glory, and shine as the Sun of righteousnes in the highest heavens for ever and ever.

And let all the Saints and holy Angels, who are but stars, remember and know, that they shine but with

with a borrowed light, and therfore muſt diſappear at the appearing of this glorious Sun, that all the world may behold his face in Righteouſneſs, and the whole earth be enlightned with his glory.

Let him be true, and every man a Lyer, let him be holy, and every man a ſinner; he muſt increaſe, but we muſt decreaſe.

And let every Saint and ſervant of God ſay, let every friend of the Bridegroom ſay, *This my joy therefore is fulfilled:* for this is the great end of the Saints, acceſs unto, & acceptance with the Father through Jeſus Chriſt. *Joh.* 14. 13. *And whatſoever ye ſhal aske in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.* If God and Jeſus Chriſt be hereby glorified, we have our end, our all.

The ſumm, and ſcope, and perfection

fection of all our faith, and hope of all our praying, preaching, hearing, reading, doing, and suffering, is this, *That he may be glorified.*

Isa. 61. 3.

In this therefore let us joy and rejoyce, in this let our souls acquiesse, and take up, as in our spiritual center and Heavenly rest: as in our *Canaan*, our Heaven, our all, which is dearer and sweeter to us then our reputations, estates, liberties, lives, yea then our very souls, then all our own concernments. That Jesus Christ, and the Father in him is glorified and exalted by the great things that he doth and will do in Heaven, for his poor, sinful, and unworthy, tempted, and afflicted Servants here on earth. *Heb.* 13. 7,8. *Considering the end of their conversation Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*

FINIS.

ERRATA.

IN the Epiſtle, page 2. line 6. for form read from, and page 4. line 11. read thoſe. In the Book, p. 59. l. 12. r. life, p. 75 l. 22. blot out the, p. 83. l. 2. r. Non-Ordinancers, p. 153. l. 13. r. Demonſtration.